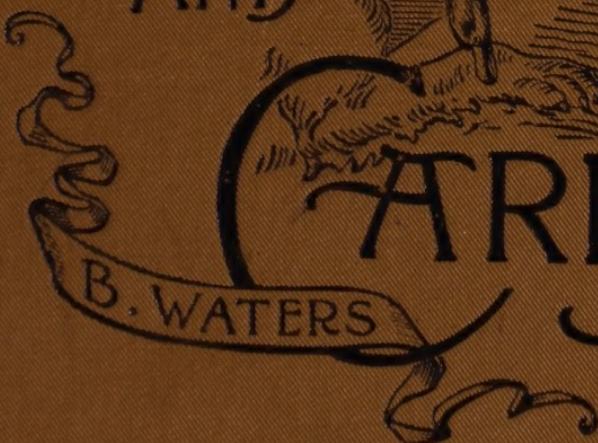


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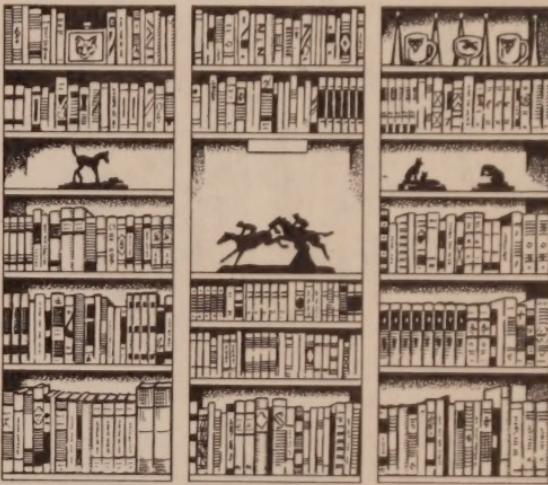


AND



CARRY

B. WATERS



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CHESAPEAKE BAY DOG.

(A retrieve.)

# FETCH AND CARRY

## A Treatise on Retrieving

By B. WATERS

### TO THE READER:

During my absence in the West the presswork of *FETCH AND CARRY* was begun and completed. Through inadvertence the titles of two cuts, the frontispiece and that on page 117, were exchanged, thus making a palpable error. Yet as this in no wise affects the merit of the text, such as it may be, the reader may indulgently not heed the error.

B. WATERS.



CHESAPEAKE BAY *Retriever*  
(A retrieve.)

# FETCH AND CARRY

A Treatise on Retrieving

By B. WATERS



NEW YORK

1895

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B. WATERS

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## PREFACE.

THERE is no part of a dog's work to the gun which is more important than retrieving, whether it is considered either from the standpoint of profit or pleasure.

Notwithstanding its importance, no author, so far as I know, has given the subject special consideration and amplification. Moreover, all authors have been pleased to treat it as an incidental education in respect to serving the gun, whereas it is a distinct education by itself.

Both the force and natural methods are described and explained from the standpoint of the modern theory and practice of training, and many branches of education relating to the dog in his double capacity of finder and retriever are also fully treated.

The chapter on "English Retrievers," by Capt. C. E. McMurdo, of Charlottesville, Va., will be found specially interesting and instructive.



## CHAPTER I.

### The Amateur Trainer.

AT the outset the qualities which the beginner should cultivate when he assumes the task of teaching will be considered; for dog training is not inherently an art composed on the one hand of a dog's ability to learn, and, on the other, of awkward and ignorant effort on the part of the novice. Too often the dog's failure to learn is attributed to his stupidity or perverseness, instead of to its true cause, the incompetency of the teacher.

Reading a treatise on training does not necessarily make a good trainer; but from it the amateur can learn how to teach after correct methods in giving the dog an education. From it the novice will learn the best manner of acquiring the desired experience and the way to avoid errors, all of which, as aids to a correct start, are not inconsiderable.

The application of the art rests with the trainer, and success or failure will result accordingly as he is capable or incapable, and is industrious or indolent as a teacher.

Dog training, in any of its branches, is an art requiring both patience and skill. Instead of the qualities too often exhibited by the beginner—that is, violence and impatience—he must cultivate the same calm demeanor and

good-tempered tone which he uses in ordinary every-day matters. It may be remarked, by the way, that the ordinary every-day manner of the beginner, disassociated from attempts at training, is no criterion by which to judge of his manner as a trainer. He may then be passively good tempered; but once he becomes an active teacher, intent on forcing the dog to do certain things, impatience and ill temper may appear. When out of temper, many men do not hesitate to grossly abuse a dog. The passive amiability or active bad temper is not infrequently observed in other and more trifling matters wherein the man takes more than a passive part, as, for instance, where he is engaged in anything which brings him directly into responsible action; sometimes even in so trifling a matter as a friendly discussion on indifferent subjects irritability or peevishness is shown, or there is an over-exacting selfishness and disregard of others. But amongst equals such is not of any special importance, since it does not then reach the stage of personal violence. When the same ill temper is vented on the dog, the consequences are radically different. There is no direct public sentiment to protect him from his teacher, and he cannot tell his grievances to the public; in short, he is almost defenseless. Aside from his natural affection and devotion to his master, which should always appeal to man's merciful consideration, his utter helplessness and dependent state are a constant plea against unnecessary punishment. Be kind to the defenseless dog because he is defenseless, and be kind to him because he loves you, if not for the common principles of humanity.

From the foregoing, the beginner will infer that self-

discipline is required. He should cultivate even good temper, a matter he should bear in mind always. It is necessary for his own self-respect, for his peace of mind, for his success as a trainer, for his reputation amongst his fellow men, and last, but not least, for the proper treatment of the dog. An ungovernably ill-tempered trainer is never a skillful one, and he is always cruel to his dogs. Moreover, nothing is more offensive to others than orders bawled out in loud and angry tones, and harsh punishment administered, not as a corrective, but solely to gratify a malevolent disposition. It is therefore a matter of first importance that the beginner discipline himself in these matters.

If loud orders and violent gestures are used in teaching, they must be used in like manner when the dog is trained; since the dog, being habituated to them, comprehends no other, and the man, also habituated to them, cannot use any other without the most constant self-discipline. Such manner is as unrefined as it is coarse and offensive. It is, moreover, unnecessary. The dog can be trained to obey promptly orders delivered in the ordinary tone of voice. Violent gestures add nothing to their potency. As a companion, a sportsman who angrily and violently handles his dog is not much sought, and at best is not a desirable one afield. Aside from the offensiveness of the manner, it mars the dog's performance; for he hears a torrent of scolding to which he has become more or less indifferent, and much of which he does not understand specifically; though he does understand that his master is angry, and that therefore it is better to stay at a good distance from him. The noise also alarms the game and is harmful to the sport. Thus, while attempt-

ing to train the dog, there are sufficient reasons for the beginner to observe the most rigid self-discipline in respect to himself. If he cannot curb his temper at the start, it is not to be expected that he can do so when habit shall have fixed his turbulent manner permanently. Sometimes he may slowly correct a bad temper after having given it full fling, but he has so much gained if he can teach kindly from the beginning.

As to the pitch of the voice, the ordinary tone is loud enough. The dog can be taught obedience to quiet orders given in an ordinary tone, uttered pleasantly. The loudness of the order adds nothing whatever to its force or efficiency, nor does it give the dog any better comprehension of it. If the dog can hear the command, the tone in which it was given is as loud as all purposes require.

It is commonly said that the beginner must spoil a dog or two before he can become a good trainer. It is not far from the fact that he does so, but why is it necessary for him to do so? It is more an admission of the beginner's incompetency than it is of the necessity of spoiling the dogs. It is extremely difficult to impress on the beginner the importance of making haste slowly. He does not realize that his own impatience and requirements are far ahead of the dog's comprehension at the start. After attempting to train two or three dogs, having then observed the effects of ill temper and impatience, he knows that they are harmfully obstructive to success, and he then adopts a conservative method, which he finds is in strict consonance with the method recommended for his adoption at the beginning. By observing the proper guidance at the beginning, he could have made better progress

without spoiling any dogs. He would also have a higher grade of training from the start, with less labor and worry in it.

The beginner, too, often starts his attempt at training on a false theory of canine nature. He assumes, in accord with general belief, that the dog has no intelligence; and that in some vague, indefinable manner, the dog acquires something that seems like knowledge, but which is not knowledge. Knowledge, such as we observe is employed by man, is not conceded to the dog; therefore its equivalent, he assumes, can be violently forced into the dog.

Few beginners credit the dog with reasoning powers, notwithstanding that he gains most of his knowledge by experience, and that it is a growth gradually acquired from observation and applied intelligently to the needs of his existence. They accept force as the agent. An attempt to teach on such a harmful theory must be disappointing in its results, quite as much so as if applied to the human subject.

Thus the beginner will perceive that he will find much occasion for studying himself. After a time, more or less long, according to the temperament and ability of the trainer, deliberation, coolness and self-control become habitual.

In this treatise every pains will be taken to give the beginner a full knowledge of the subject, both in theory and practice. The methods given have been found eminently successful. They are founded on the theory of the dog's intelligence, which is an intelligence inferior to that of man, but which is analogous in its manner of development and expression.

It is a mistake to begin the serious part of the dog's education while he is too young. He must have matured enough to have a fair degree of intelligence, in order that he may be capable of acquiring knowledge. Of course, ample time must be given him to gain his experiences and remember his lessons, and at a later period to learn their practical application. All this it is necessary for the trainer to keep constantly in mind.

There is much more for the dog to keep in mind than is apparent at first thought. He is expected to be thoroughly educated when he is a year or eighteen months old. Think how much longer, wise reader, the trainer took to acquire his own knowledge. Think, too, how imperfect it is, and the great length of time it requires to apply it skillfully in practice.

Regularity in giving the lessons should be carefully observed. If the dog be in good health and sufficiently matured, the daily teachings should not be omitted; but they should be given with judgment. If the trainer observes that the dog shows signs of great physical or mental weariness, let the lesson then end. Studying is quite as great a strain on the young dog's mind as it is on the mind of the boy. We all know that the lessons of our own childhood were not easily learned. Nor should the trainer be all the time training. All the natural vivacity and playfulness should not be driven out of the puppy by overwork. In this connection, a quotation, from an article published in the *Educational Review*, will serve to give greater point to the subject. While the excerpt refers more to the physical and mental development of children, it none the less, with the necessary modification, applies to the analogous development of the lower ani-



### TIREUR A VOL.

(Picture said to be nearly 200 years old, showing ancient manner of wildfowl shooting.)

mals, since there is an extraordinary similarity in their growth, instincts and mentality. He says:

"There was a time when Puritanical asceticism regarded the playful tendencies of childhood as evidence of depravity and wickedness. Play is now known to be the chief agency for co-ordinating the different departments of the brain and accomplishing the complete evolution of the child physically, intellectually and morally. Play has been defined as 'the work of the child.' It is more. It is the child's worship as well as its work. It is the way in which the child thanks its Creator for life, and by which it develops energy and vital force of body, mind and spirit. It is the means by which it gets acquainted with its environment and with its own powers. All healthy children love to play, and play is the best agency for making children healthy. Play helps to restore harmony to those child natures in which the physical, the intellectual and the moral powers are not properly balanced, owing to the evil influences of heredity. It increases the power of the vital life-producing organs more than any formal exercises. No other process can increase lung and circulation power so rapidly and so effectively as running with a purpose, for the achievement of some clearly defined aim in connection with a game or play. Dr. F. A. Schmidt, of Bonn, says: 'In a few minutes running causes the breathing capacity to expand from twelve to thirteen times. In the running game lies for the youth a healthy development of the lungs which cannot be produced by any other method. Not to give to the children the desire to run about freely means that one sins against the health of the rising generation.'"

The powers of the mind, like those of the body, are a growth. Only the simple elements of learning can be wisely taught at first. Knowledge increases with age, and the elements of it are often the most difficult to learn. In teaching there are no royal roads or charmed methods. The trainer must count on his own skill, industry and intelligence to attain success, supplemented with tact, patience and kindness, and all the while he must keep in mind that too much should not be expected or attempted.

He must, moreover, from the nature of things, expect but little advancement from the first lessons; expect nothing of permanent value from other than long-continued effort. One has but to remember how slowly and with what pains the A B Cs of childhood were learned, to have consideration for the efforts of the puppy. If the teacher of our first lessons had used loud words, violent actions and unreasonable punishment, we would have considered him highly offensive instead of educational. And yet, under the most favorable conditions, our knowledge was acquired little by little, from the most painstaking labor, through a long period of time, and marked by many mistakes and not a few failures. Be kind to the puppy which has a novice for a teacher.

Much that is demanded of the dog in servitude is contrary to his nature and inclination. He will work with endless enthusiasm and effort when in pursuit of prey. On the contrary, while he dearly likes man's companionship, he detests menial servitude. Only by making work accessory to the pursuit of game, and so blending the two that he cannot discern where either begins or ends, can his best effort be engaged; or, in such instances as he can

discriminate, as in retrieving—which is almost entirely an educational act—he may show enthusiasm in it, for the sake of its association with the capturing of prey and also for the kind approbation of his master. But, in any event, retrieving is but an incident of the main event, the capture; and the main event is sufficient to keep up the interest in the incidental part. However, the enthusiasm of some dogs is so great that they will take delight in any work which is associated with searching for prey.

The passion to seek prey is a constant factor to supplement the trainer's attempts at teaching. Like all carnivorous animals, dogs naturally, zealously and (with little experience) intelligently seek their prey. The pursuit affords the most pleasurable excitement known to dog nature, as it is also the most important occupation of his wild life, since it is his manner of securing a supply of food. Man, being somewhat carnivorous, and therefore something of a game-hunter himself, finds a means of enhancing his own pleasure and enlarging his success by pressing into his service and diverting to his own use the wonderful seeking powers of the dog, whose passion to hunt is so great that, when in pursuit of prey, he will submit to many obnoxious restrictions and some punishment without thereby losing his interest or lessening his efforts.

But, in teaching the dog to retrieve, particularly in the first lessons, there is none of the incentive to effort as in the actual pursuit and capture; therefore he must either be beguiled into it through his fondness for amusement and the love of approbation; or, if he refuses, then he must be induced to retrieve through a fear of punishment, which is associated with the pleasure derived from appro-

bation when he obeys. In other parts of the education to the gun the trainer can shape the dog's natural efforts into some formality in consonance with his purpose, even though the dog's efforts and his own may be crude ; but in teaching retrieving the trainer must both induce effort and educate it, for there is no natural incentive in it to the dog, as there is when he is in the actual pursuit of prey. It is for a wise purpose that the dog's nature is so. The pursuit of prey is in accord with his natural impulses, and is directly profitable and necessary to him in obtaining a food supply. The instinct to seek and capture prey has been transmitted to him through innumerable generations. It is as natural to him as it is for a goat to eat grass. The same impulse impels the trainer. Be there disappointments and failures innumerable, the fondness of both teacher and pupil for pursuit and capture lightens the hardships or mistakes, and is a constant incentive to successful effort. Thus, by constantly working together for a common object, and the man incessantly asserting his domination, the dog in time learns to adjust his efforts to the methods of his master, partly from the restraint which is constantly upon him and partly from his own powers of observation; for he is keen to observe what methods lead to success and what to failure, and he much prefers to seek under his master's restraint than not to seek at all.

But teaching on the part of the teacher and learning to retrieve on the part of the dog are, in the first lessons, entirely detached from the fierce and entralling pleasures of pursuit and profit. There is but little incentive to effort on the part of the dog ; but the teacher has still ample material to work upon, namely, the dog's intelli-

gence, love for his master, desire for approbation, fear of punishment and need of food, all of which are important factors in inducing him to serve man's purpose. With these qualities as a starting point, the elementary stages of the education can be satisfactorily completed, after which, when the dog learns that the art has a practical application in his greatest pleasure, he will put into it all his enthusiasm and industry. Indeed, as retrieving is so directly associated with the capture of his prey, he not infrequently becomes over fond of it. This is particularly true if he has ever eaten a bird, or if the entrails of birds have been given to him to encourage him in his first attempts; for the memory of the treat and the hope of a recurrence of it will be with him for a long while.

Thus, at some length, the general characteristics of the amateur and some of the simpler traits of the dog have been touched upon, imperfectly withal, as the observing trainer will have learned when he gets a true insight into doggy nature; nor is it to be expected or desired that this phase of the subject should be enlarged upon more than is required by the main subject, though within that limit sufficient for the amateur's guidance is given.

It will be readily perceived that dog training is an art which requires preparation for its practical application. A coarse and brutal man may be a dog trainer, but he is such more by the accident of circumstance than by natural fitness. Modern progress demands a higher standard of training. The old ideas of secret methods, or of severe punishment, or of the peculiar fitness of some taciturn individual who was a great slayer of birds, or that the peculiar instinct of the dog could be developed by but a few—fallacies so long cherished by the novice—belong

far away in the vague past. They are all in the realm of ignorance. The dog acquires his knowledge much after the manner in which his teacher acquired his own, and the teacher cannot go far wrong if he, with the proper modifications, governs himself accordingly.

However good a treatise is in itself, the novice will perceive that much is still left to be wrought out by the trainer's own industry and skill.



## CHAPTER II.

### **The Importance of Retrieving.**

IN all kinds of wing-shooting, whether on land or water, a retriever is a necessity, if the spirit of true sport, or even its form, be maintained.

Killing the birds is but one element of the sport, or at least it by itself alone is incomplete. From the stand-point of true sportsmanship, bringing the dead and wounded birds to bag is quite as important as it is to kill them—perhaps more so in a moral sense; for, to justify the act of killing, the birds must be gathered when it is possible to do so, and that, too, for food purposes. Killing for the mere sake of killing is wanton destruction. Such, by itself, cannot justly be termed sport. It is more akin to the craving of the savage for bloodshed and destruction, equally pleasurable whether exercised in driving a whole herd of buffalo over a precipice or in cooking a missionary.

Killing birds for the necessary and useful purpose of food affords a just foundation for the superstructure of sport; the latter, as it relates to sportsmanship, referring more to the manner in which possession is effected than to the mere act of killing the birds; for we cannot assume for a moment that their death of itself constitutes

the pleasure. If so, all the forms of sportsmanship are unnecessary, and the slaughter by the pot-hunter is quite as legitimate as any other form of reducing to possession.

But the element of skill on the part of the shooter, and the chance to escape which is given the bird, the attack and defense, are pitted against each other. But a limited destruction follows each shot, even though it be successful.

The birds are in a wild state, cunning and wary, swift and strong of wing and foot. Their habitat is in the midst of wild nature, in the heavy woods and thickets, in the thick brush and grass of the open fields, or on the open prairies. And as to the wildfowl, they have a still more protecting environment. In such difficult surroundings their natural cunning and intelligence and swiftness of flight, stimulated by an acquired fear of man, serve them well against his skill and superior intelligence.

As to the manner of pursuit and capture, the unwritten laws of sportsmanship ordain that birds must be shot only when on the wing. A pot-shot is an act odious to all true sportsmen. The birds belong to the people, hence no man can justly employ means which will enable him to grossly increase his success.

In retrieving the birds, the same unwritten laws, the laws of usage, ordain that a retriever be used, both for usefulness and a greater refinement in shooting. For, however skillful one may be as a shooter, he must depend largely on the dog's efforts for his pleasure and success, since the dog must find the birds for the shooter to kill, and gather them in after they are killed. It is proper that it should be so, inasmuch as shooting is largely a

matter of good eyesight, steady nerves and skill; while finding and retrieving are largely dependent on the functional powers of the dog's nose and intelligence.

Without a retriever, the task of gathering the dead and wounded birds entails so much painstaking searching, loss of time, and withal is so uncertain and disappointing in its results, that it then ceases to be a sport; instead, it becomes a labor. Moreover, without a retriever the dead birds are extremely difficult to find, and as to the wounded, nearly all are lost.

Many circumstances add to the difficulties of gathering the birds by the aid of sight, as, for instance, their colors, which blend so harmoniously with the vegetation; their ability to securely conceal themselves under leaves or grass; their tenacity of life and ability to run a short distance from where they fell, even when wounded fatally; and the difficulty of marking accurately their fall in cover or in the open on cloudy days; or the difficulty of marking five or six birds which have been shot in rapid succession.

These remarks on the difficulties which the shooter encounters in the attempt to gather his own birds apply to upland shooting. In wildfowl shooting the difficulties are many times multiplied and a retriever is indispensable.

Without a retriever, aside from the labor, uncertainty and loss of birds, the sport loses the element of skillfulness, refinement and sportsmanlike finish. There is also a certain wastefulness in killing birds when it is a certainty that a large percentage will be lost, as is sure to be the case without a retriever.

## CHAPTER III.

### **The Natural Retriever.**

THE natural retriever, in the sense in which the term is commonly understood, is one which retrieves by natural impulse and without previous teaching or experience. The accomplishment is supposed to be transmitted through heredity, and in that manner is instinctive; at least, such is the theory. It rests mostly on assertion.

A good retriever is the product of a good education combined with the necessary natural capabilities. Superior natural qualities, such as natural aptitude, enthusiasm and precocity, do not of themselves make a good retriever without the necessary schooling. The education is indispensable. There is much more to the accomplishment than the mere act of grasping the bird in the mouth.

It is true that a few dogs of rare intelligence comprehend the purposes of retrieving with little teaching, and rapidly improve by experience; but, however meager the education may be, the accomplishment, so far as it relates to intelligently serving the gun, is acquired, not inherited.

The setter or pointer will naturally pick up a bird without any schooling. Other dogs and cats will do so

too; but if left to their own pleasure and natural inclination, they next would eat it.

The dog is naturally eager to gain possession of the dead bird. If his master calls him after he has picked up the bird, he may hold it in his mouth while going to his master. If he then is praised and caressed, as is frequently done under such circumstances, and if he has intelligence sufficient to associate the act of carrying the bird with the act of approval, he may thereafter intelligently repeat the act, particularly if his love of approbation is great. But do not think that he may go on developing into a good retriever.

There are good authorities who assert that the natural retriever, which is supposed to inherit his qualities, is born with a knowledge which comes from inherited education. How it can be so is not explained. No knowledge, even in the superior mentality of man, is inherited.

The mental phenomena of the dog's life and his methods of acquiring knowledge do not in the least sustain the theory. He acquires his knowledge much after the manner that man acquires it. But, assuming that his knowledge of retrieving is inherited, why then is not all his knowledge inherited? It is not logical to maintain that an education taught to a few individuals of the breed has become instinctive, while the broader education of every-day life, uniformly inculcated for generations, is not instinctive. Nor is it explained how a matter of education, which is of no direct benefit to the dog, can become hereditary. It is a greater gain to assume that the dog needs educating. A good retriever is not the work of chance any more than is a good lawyer, doctor or dog trainer.

## CHAPTER IV.

### **The Educated Retriever.**

No retriever is properly fitted for good work unless he has a good education. One with no education, or one with an imperfect education, or one with an education on false principles, is sure to work in a bungling and unsatisfactory manner. A slovenly and disobedient retriever will mar the best of sport.

However willing a dog may be to obey and perform well, if he does not know methods and commands, or work to the gun, he can add but little, if any, to the pleasure or success of the shooter.

The beginner is commonly satisfied with too low a standard of retrieving. His own standard of sport is often not any too high. He is eager to capture regardless of method, and this eagerness many times is the source of unseemly scrambles between himself and the dog to get possession of the bird. Such is but a short remove from no standard. The educated retriever has a perfect understanding of each order, and he is obedient and knows how to properly perform his work. His manner of retrieving is finished. He carries the bird without mauling or mutilating it, and he delivers it carefully to hand.

To maintain his standard of high performance, he must be handled skillfully.

Except when incapacitated by illness, the educated retriever can be relied upon to do his work properly at all times. Obedience and discipline have been so thoroughly inculcated in him that they are habitual. He may at some juncture dislike to go in mud or briers, but he knows that obedience is imperatively demanded and he will not refuse. In short, as between the educated and the uneducated retriever, there is all the difference that there is between permanency and fickleness, or skill and unskillfulness. In this relation the distinctions will become more fully apparent in the succeeding chapters.



## CHAPTER V.

### **Implements and Commands.**

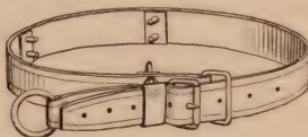
A WHISTLE, a whip, a spike collar, are all the implements needed in teaching a retriever or to handle him after he is taught.

The whistle is but little used in handling the finished retriever. While in the act of retrieving, the retriever seldom goes more than a gunshot distance from the handler. A celluloid or horn whistle is the best. If the whistle is of wood it absorbs the saliva and becomes foul. Metal oxydizes, makes the mouth sore, and in a cold temperature, when full of frost, is most unpleasant to have in the mouth.

The spike collar is a most useful implement when properly used. One made of a flat strap is the best, as then it will not turn on the dog's neck and thereby throw the points of the spikes outward. The illustration, given herewith, shows the manner of its construction. The following specifications will enable the amateur to make one for himself. Length of longest strap, twenty-two inches; width, one and one-quarter inches. The shorter piece, from the end of the ring to the end of the buckle, from four to five inches. The buckle and the metal loop, through which the strap plays, should be square.

The metal loop, being only large enough to permit the strap to play freely, prevents it from twisting when on the dog's neck; thus the points of the spikes are held constantly in the correct position. They are about five-eighths of an inch long, with short beveled points.

Some trainers prefer the whip as a means of forcing retrieving, while others prefer the whip and spike collar combined. The whip tends to alarm and cow, and is therefore not a desirable factor in teaching, except perhaps when a dog of uncommon obstinacy is compelled to



retrieve. It is a very punishing method, and is quite as likely to be abused as is any other method.

The orders and signals are few and simple. There is very little that is conventional about them. The trainer can adopt such ones as please his fancy. The ones most in common use are the following:

“Fetch” denotes that the dog is to fetch the bird to the shooter, as the term implies. When the order is properly obeyed, he brings the bird directly to the shooter in a cheerful manner and without mouthing. The orders, “Bring it here” or “Fetch it here,” are sometimes used. A distinct order of one word is better, for obvious reasons.

“Heel” denotes that the dog is to walk behind the trainer and there remain till ordered out.

“Dead bird” gives the dog notice that a bird has been

killed, but the term is unnecessary, as the following order includes this one so far as all practical purposes are concerned.

"Seek" denotes that the dog is to search for a dead or wounded bird. Some trainers use other orders, as "Look for it," "Hunt it up," "Seek dead."

"Go on" and "Hie on" are the orders for the dog to go on and begin work.

"Drop," or "Down," or "Down charge," or "Charge," denotes that the dog is to lie down.

"Come in" is the order to cease work and come in to the handler.

Any command should be in as few words as possible, and only the ordinary tones of voice should be used in its delivery. They are then easier to give, they can be uttered more distinctly and there is a greater elegance in the manner of their delivery.

The signals are taught by associating them with commands. A wave of the hand to the right or left denotes that the dog is to take his course accordingly. The arm extended perpendicularly is the signal to drop. A wave of the hand forward, or a snap of the fingers, will be a signal for the dog to go ahead. The signals associated with the oral commands will in time be noted and obeyed without the use of the latter.

The spike collar is an instrument capable of inflicting the most cruel punishment when improperly applied, and can do permanent injury, or even cause death, if too much force be used. Violent shocks and complete exhaustion, often repeated, may result in a broken constitution, an injured nervous system, or in great and obstructive shyness. With timid dogs it is particularly unsatisfactory

in its results if too violently used. But such application is an abuse of it, and the faults or vices of the trainer cannot justly be blamed on the collar. The correct use of the collar is to use it as an aid in training—not an instrument to aid the trainer in satisfying his anger. The collar of itself teaches nothing. It inherently possesses no special potency. It is merely a convenient instrument to inflict pain, to the end that the dog does a certain act to avoid the pain. Everything of value lies in the manner of its application. The skill of the handler is what gives the collar its efficiency. Brutality is a perversion of its purpose. The broad claim made by a few, that it will accomplish everything, is absurd. The claim that it is solely an instrument of torture is equally absurd. If the trainer should so far forget himself as to punish his dog unnecessarily, let him be frank with himself and admit that he has done wrong, and that the collar was but an instrument in his hands.



## CHAPTER VI.

### The Natural Method.

ALTHOUGH radically imperfect in itself, and uncertain in its application and results, the natural method, so called, is an important factor in teaching retrieving by either suasion or force.

It is the method which is commonly first employed by the amateur. It rarely, as a method, finds favor with the professional trainers.

This method is an important part of the method mis-called the force system, since it is employed at nearly all stages of it and is complementary to it. Being considered a distinct method, it will be so treated here. Yet the term "natural method" is a misnomer. It more properly should be termed the amusement method. It is misleading in its implication, since, as an art, there is very little method in it. Nor is it correct to say that it is natural. The term probably was adopted at a time when observation of what was natural and what was artificial was imperfect, and it probably has since been used as a matter of convenience. Indeed, the nomenclature of the dog and gun is neither voluminous nor exact.

Retrieving comes from education, be the same little or much. It is no more natural for the dog to learn re-

trieving than it is for him to learn anything else; nor is it more natural for him to work for his master for nothing than it is for the latter to work for some other man for nothing. We may consider that the term, fixed as it is in the nomenclature of dog training, has simply a technical meaning; though, accepted in its common meaning, it is misleading and confusing to the amateur, as it erroneously implies a system which the dog follows by his intuitions or hereditary proclivities.

The beginner should divest himself of such preconceived ideas of a natural system as conflict with sensible teaching, and instead consider that the education of the dog is the result of prolonged and diligent effort, skillfully applied.

The natural method is not the best one. It is simple. It requires but little skill in the manner commonly taught, and it also requires comparatively but little thought or knowledge in its application. It is not a system, though it may be considered a part of a system.

It readily suggests itself to the beginner from the natural inclination and practice of puppies to carry objects in play, and from their fondness for a playmate; nevertheless the puppy is intent on amusing himself. It is beneficial to him, however, since nearly all his play is a close imitation of pursuit, capture, battle and escape—incidents common in wild life and necessary to his existence.

The faults of the system will be briefly enumerated. In its practical application, when the dog is being taught, the system is entirely dependent upon the dog's fondness for play or amusement, combined in a lesser degree with his desire to gain his master's approbation, all of which

are uncertain and variable factors. The desire for play is variable in one dog as compared with another, and, from time to time, it is variable in the same dog.

Such dogs as refuse to play, or ones which take no pleasure in gaining their master's praises, are outside of the application of this system.

As frolic and praise are the groundwork of each lesson, the dog seldom treats retrieving in a sober, business-like way before he reaches maturity. When he becomes sober and serious from age, he often retains as part of his education many frivolous ways and faults which became habitual in conjunction with the lessons.

The manner in which the dog is pleased to perform the act of retrieving is almost entirely out of the trainer's control. In respect to details, if the dog does them well or ill, he does them as best pleases himself. Having the idea that the lesson is a frolic, it is natural that he should conduct himself accordingly; thus the natural or amusement method of retrieving shows in its results all the faults engendered by play. The finished manner and obedience of the correctly trained retriever are rarely established. Hard mouths are a very common result of the system.

The natural retriever sooner or later finds the work irksome or disagreeable, whereupon he performs in a slovenly manner, is more or less disobedient, or perhaps refuses to retrieve under any circumstances. This at first commonly occurs at a juncture when the dog is overworked and weary, or when there is obnoxious cover or heavy footing, as in briars or in mud; or he may be feeling rebellious after punishment for some fault when he has, in whole or in part, lost his interest in field work.

As the dog's own willingness to participate was the peculiarity of his nature through which the trainer gradually decoyed him into retrieving, it is quite as natural that he should refuse to work when it ceased to be either pleasurable or profitable to him. As to work or not to work rested with himself, according to his own inclination, he could refuse to work quite as readily as he could accept.

So much for the faults of the system. The peculiarities of dog nature will now be touched upon, as they relate to the subject.

Nearly all puppies have a passionate fondness for frolicking. They will, by hours together, play with their master, with children or with each other. In the absence of a playmate, the puppy's irrepressible fondness for play—a trait implanted by nature for his best mental and physical development—stimulates him to find ways and means for its gratification. He takes an old shoe or other object of his liking and carries or throws it about till he is wearied. At play his joy and enthusiasm are without bounds. He goes through the forms of fierce, mimic battle, of chasing and being chased, of hostile surprise and bold defiance. All the fun may end by a brave onslaught and complete destruction of the old shoe. The frolic rarely ends before weariness supervenes. In due order sleep and rest follow, whereafter the fun is boisterously and vigorously resumed. Thus he goes through the necessary development in the manner ordained by nature's laws; therefrom he acquires activity, strength, a sharp judgment and a healthful development of body and mind.

In short, the play develops the puppy for the serious

part of dog life, regardless of education or fine pedigree. On this trait, this fondness for play, the trainer must base all his educational efforts, supplemented by praise and rewards for such acts as are well done, and disapproval of such acts as are faulty. The dog's desire for approbation can be greatly developed by judicious praise and approval.

Now, as to the method itself, there is nothing fixed or arbitrary about it.

The intermediate stages of education, between carrying an object in play at the beginning and retrieving it usefully to command, are complex and numerous, and vary greatly in every respect—as much so as one dog's character and mental capacity differ from those of another. Even the same dog will vary from time to time in his progress and interest. The different dispositions, likes and dislikes, intelligence and stupidity, whims and peculiarities, are traits which the trainer must study and play upon. All the peculiarities may appear in a multitude of ways while the dog is in training. Even the trainer's own skill will vary. The capabilities of the dog should be carefully noted. Useful peculiarities should be cultivated, and undesirable ones should be suppressed or discouraged, though always modifying and adapting the training to the puppy's capacity and temperament.

As before intimated, a course of training which may be a perfect success when applied to one dog may be a failure when applied to another. Each dog must be treated according to his peculiarities.

In the application of the natural method, very little punishment can be given even when the dog is wilfully wrong. To the dog the lesson means merely an enjoy-

able time, though to the trainer the pretense of fun has a serious purpose. Thus both are actuated by widely different motives. Punishment would therefore spoil the dog's fun and end the lesson. On the other hand, to make it unrestricted fun would defeat the trainer's purpose. Under the pretext of frolic a compromise must be established. By imperceptible stages the fun is gradually merged into business—that is to say, into retrieving.

There are times, however, when the puppy will not play; times when he does not care to be amused; times when he wishes to be let alone. Then there is no lesson, or at least no lesson which is a gain.

Mature dogs care little for frolic. For that reason, with few exceptions, this system in its application is limited to puppies. A dog which will not play is beyond the scope of the system. Even in the rare instances in which an aged dog can be induced to play, he, having wisdom with age, soon discerns the purpose of the trainer, and thereupon loses interest and quits.

The progress of the puppy in the play system is often extremely irregular, slow and faulty. He may express too much of his animal spirits by violently shaking the object to be retrieved, in imitation of combat with an enemy; he may stop to tear it, or race away with it, or do any one of a dozen other things he ought not to do, from the trainer's standpoint. When at a certain stage, which particularly pleases him, it is difficult to advance him to the next higher one. Or he may have some whim or whims which are all wrong as the trainer sees them, and which may require weeks of careful effort to correct.

In his training, both trainer and method are subservient to the pleasure of the puppy. At best, the trainer can only bide patiently the puppy's whims and inclinations, and the amusement features often last many weeks after the trainer heartily wishes them ended.

In most instances the lessons, when successful, are given from puppyhood to maturity. During this period the discipline may become so firmly fixed by constant repetition that at maturity the dog may obey from force of habit, supplemented by the ascendancy which the trainer, by his superior will power and intelligence, gains over him.

To entirely restrain one's own purposes and individuality within such limitations as are required by the puppy's whims or pleasure, requires a great deal of tact, patience and good temper; or, in respect to the latter, a suppression of ill-temper.

Punishment can only be administered cautiously, and then only as a corrective—that is, to prevent him from doing something which is wrong, not to force him to do that which is right. It is much easier to prevent him from doing something which he wishes to do than it is to make him do something that the trainer wishes done. Yet withal it is an easy matter to chill the dog's ardor by punishment under this system. By attempting to check him in one detail of the sport he may be checked in all.

Generally speaking, the fewer alarming demonstrations that are made while training the greater will be the success. A single miscalculation in punishment may temporarily or permanently end the whole affair under this system, the ever-recurring fact that the puppy can quit asserting itself whenever he is so pleased.

The lessons are greatly helped if the trainer can join heartily and sympathetically in the fun; if not so in reality, then so in appearance. A spirited participation on his part adds greatly to the dog's enjoyment and serves to engage his interest permanently. The system is based on deception, and the better the puppy is deceived the better he will learn, if skillfully managed. However, it is extremely difficult for many staid, serious men to simulate a gayety and playfulness which they do not feel, or at least not in accordance with the puppy's standard. Sham cheerfulness and heavy capers are not likely to last long, and such grim attempts at fun, with a too rapid attempt at mixing work therewith, are sure to excite the puppy's distrust or to chill his interest. Once his interest is destroyed it is no easy matter to again engage it, and afterward it is easy to offend his sense of fun. The play must be genuine if the puppy's interest is to be engaged permanently.

It should not be inferred that all dogs taught after this manner retrieve well. Only a relatively small number do so. The work of retrievers thus taught is commonly inferior, showing the loose and unfinished effects of the playful lessons. Therewith may be added such peculiar faults and idiosyncrasies as are natural to the dog, or which are incidentally acquired by him.

However, a dog taught after this system may retrieve in a perfect manner; yet the perfection is not from any inherent virtue of the system. It is simply the manner which the dog has been pleased to adopt.

The natural method cannot be successfully applied to all dogs. As to old dogs, it is generally uncertain and in most instances unsuccessful in its application. Only

a relatively few old dogs have much playfulness, and those are generally discreetly observant. They are discriminating even in their play, and it is not an easy matter to deceive them, or at least it is not easy to deceive them a number of times in succession on the same matter. They soon fathom the purpose of the trainer and thereafter refuse to be taught. They are too intelligent to believe that work is amusement.

Sometimes, by associating the act of fetching with a palatable reward, given after the act is completed, the mature dog will learn to fetch for the profit of the effort, the material gain of something to eat, which he derives from it. But he soon learns to play his teacher for the rewards, and it is extremely difficult to train him past the stage wherein he looks for immediate profit. His estimates are faultless. His cunning is equal to the occasion. If his hunger is appeased, he loses interest in the lesson at once. Therefore it is better to be sparing in the rewards, so that his appetite may not be satisfied too quickly.

It is, furthermore, a noteworthy fact that when a dog works for something to eat he is sooner and more easily satisfied than when his food is disassociated from work—in which matter he shows a degree of perception akin to that of the wiser animals. He does not like to work too much, which may be construed to his advantage as a reasoning animal.

A few families of dogs, which are naturally intelligent, good-tempered and industrious, may take readily to retrieving and learn it quickly with little teaching, but the act is due to intelligence, not to instinct.

Even special retrievers, which are carefully schooled,

frequently retrieve in a faulty manner. No system of training, however, will make all dogs good performers. Dogs vary in their capabilities quite as much as men. The intelligent dog, from experience and observation when in actual field work, soon adds a comprehensive finish to the elementary lessons taught him by his trainer. He learns the practical purposes of the art and exercises an intelligent application regardless of fixed rules. The work of such intelligent dog in retrieving, as in all other branches, will be incomparably higher in quality than that of the dog which works on the formal lines of an education. The intelligent dog, however, is not exceedingly numerous.

As to the length of time required to educate the retriever, it can be determined only by actual trial. By the natural system, it is safe to say that the time from puppyhood to maturity is none too long. However, the conditions vary greatly comparing one dog with another.

Instances have been mentioned, by writers, of puppies being taught retrieving in one lesson and of some puppies which retrieved without any lesson. It is well to ignore such statements when considered in connection with practical retrieving. If they have occurred, they are too rare to be considered a factor in practice.

In the practical application of the natural method it is first necessary to secure a puppy's affection and recognition as his master. By making a companion of him as much as possible he will soon become devoted. If he is petted betimes, and his interest is engaged by giving him palatable morsels occasionally and by personally attending to giving him his regular meals, he will soon become inseparably attached to his master.

It requires no effort to develop the puppy's fondness for play. That trait he has naturally. The trainer has but to present the opportunity for its exercise.

It is better to give the first lessons in a room. Then the puppy's play will be confined within proper limits; he is then under better control and there are no outside incidents interposing to obstruct the lesson. Spectators should be excluded from the room, as they distract the dog's attention.

A ball or glove is the object commonly employed for the puppy's edification in the first lessons. The glove is not a good article for the purpose. It absorbs saliva and the puppy is predisposed to bite and tear it, which may later develop into that most objectionable fault, namely, a hard mouth. A ball is better. It forces the puppy to open his mouth wider, it is more difficult to hold or to bite, and it cannot be caught and shaken.

In the early lessons the puppy has his way in everything to a great extent. Everything being ready, the trainer engages the puppy's attention to the ball and throws it temptingly out. The puppy springs after it instantly, proudly takes possession of it, and when the trainer attempts to take it he tries by wily maneuvers to baffle him. If left to his own devices he will sometimes permit the trainer to get close enough to reach for the ball; but he watches him closely, eyes bright, muscles tense, and he dodges quickly and is away at the moment that the trainer reaches forth to grasp the ball. His bearing is then proud and he challenges further play. He is delighted and is the embodiment of vivacity. His pleasure is unbounded. The trainer repeats the throwing and the puppy resumes as before. So the play

proceeds, the puppy proud of his agility and superiority in getting possession of the ball, and showing great craftiness in avoiding capture. If the trainer, by an affectation of stealthy advance, attempts to circumvent the puppy, the latter stands and watches him intently, conscious of his ability to avoid him by his superior speed and suppleness, and he attempts no evasion till the last moment of safety is gone.

By the exercise of mild authority the trainer regains the ball and the puppy watches eagerly for it to be thrown out again. If when it is thrown the trainer runs after it, the spirit of rivalry is intensely aroused, and the puppy then exerts all his energies to be first to get possession. In this manner the frolicking is continued.

There are certain peculiarities of the dog's manner which the trainer should try to correct from the beginning. The puppy, when caught, may hold the ball tightly in his mouth, he disliking to lose possession of it. This tendency should be discouraged. It is greatly aggravated by any attempts to forcibly pull the ball from his mouth, since he exerts greater force to retain it. A hard mouth is often developed and confirmed unintentionally in this manner. To guard against the fault, catch the dog by the collar with the right hand, at the same time taking hold of the ball with the left. If the puppy then tries to pull on the ball, the trainer can balk the effort by catching all the puppy's force in the collar and at the same time yielding but still retaining the grasp on the ball. Then press with the right foot the toes of one of his forefeet, only pinching sufficiently to make him let go of the ball, at the same time saying "Give" in an ordinary tone of voice. This method is very effective.

and does not alarm the dog in the least. By repeating this a few times he will promptly open his mouth to the order "Give," without the least effort to retain the ball. This part of the lesson, if conducted as above described, is quickly and easily taught.

From this beginning the trainer proceeds, lesson after lesson, developing the retrieving feature as much as possible, and at the same time suppressing such undesirable traits as opportunity or the dog's disposition will permit.

At the time the ball is thrown out the trainer utters the command "Fetch." He repeats it every time that it can be associated with the act, to the end that the puppy will learn and remember its meaning. He can be taught both to go after the ball and bring it to hand to the same order—"Fetch." By the constant repetition of this order (or such other word as the trainer adopts for the word of command) the puppy soon learns to associate it with retrieving the ball and then comprehends the meaning of it.

Whatever word the trainer adopts as the word of command he should use without change, and also use it only in its proper relation. To command the dog to "Fetch," "Go get it," "Bring it here," etc., is, to say the least, confusing and unskillful, and an obstruction to the training.

After the start there are no specific rules for the trainer's guidance. Thereafter much depends on his own tact, industry and intelligence.

The gradations in a course of lessons through many weeks and months, from the crude starting-point of carrying in play to retrieving to command, depend for their success on constant repetition. As the puppy matures,

obedience becomes habitual. As he ages he outgrows his frivolity and becomes sober in demeanor. To the knowledge which he has acquired by constant drilling there is added an habitual obedience, and if the trainer has been skillful he has gained his pupil's respect and affection.

A few general hints, however, can be given. When the puppy shows a lack of interest, or when he has been erroneously drilled too long and is consequently fatigued, the lesson should end at once. The peculiarities of disposition should in particular be noted and worked to advantage when opportunity offers, and anything that is obstructive to the lessons should be carefully avoided. It should be kept constantly in mind, in this relation, that what the puppy does is voluntary, and that in this system there is no way of making obedience compulsory.

By associating a reward with the act of fetching, the puppy sometimes manifests a greater interest in the work. When he fetches well, a palatable morsel, one of a number kept conveniently at hand for the purpose, is given to him as a reward. The rewards, however, must be given in moderation, and the fact impressed that they only come after well-doing; otherwise he may lose interest in the play and devote his attention to the more profitable prospect of a meal. The morsels, which tickle his palate, must be kept as auxiliary to the lessons and not as a matter of equal importance to them.

It will be noted that there is very little true training in this system. The trainer is always subject to the dog's caprice or inclination. The pupil is always the real master of the situation, and the trainer must adapt himself to the dog's moods and capabilities, and must take any course in the lessons that will further his purpose.

After the puppy has got an idea of fetching the ball, the trainer next endeavors to teach him to carry it steadily and tenderly. This is a very important feature to enforce from the beginning. Once a hard mouth is acquired, it is almost impossible to cure; while a habitually hard-mouthed retriever is worse than none. Any objectionable acts which lead up to hard mouth—such as tossing the ball in the air, dropping it and pouncing upon it, shaking or attempting to tear it, etc.—should be promptly discouraged.

If these faults cannot be suppressed in the regular lessons, it is better to give him special lessons apart from the regular ones. It is also better to give them in a different room; otherwise, if there be any unpleasant associations with the lessons, the puppy may connect them with the room and refuse to play at all.

To make the puppy carry steadily, mild compulsion is sometimes necessary. A short, light rope, two or three feet long, should be tied to his collar, thus affording a means of controlling him easily. No frolicking should be permitted at this stage. Also, to avoid complications with the regular lessons, it is better to use a different object for the dog to carry, as a corn cob, a roll of cloth, etc. Place it in the puppy's mouth, and force him to hold it steadily without biting it. If he attempts to reject it, hold the left hand under his lower jaw while the right hand holds the rope grasped close to his collar, and force him to hold the object whether he is willing to do so or not. If he attempts to bite it, tie some long, slim nails on it, about a half inch apart; then make him hold in his mouth the pad thus prepared. The dog intensely dislikes the touch of the iron on his teeth, and he

will hold the pad so prepared very tenderly. Treat him gently, but firmly, and alarm him as little as possible; but, in any event, he must be made to hold the object steadily and tenderly.

If he succeeds in ejecting the pad from his mouth, place it promptly back again, giving him at the same time a light stroke with a whip and the order "Hold" or "Steady," or any other order which the trainer prefers to use. This treatment is so different from what he has been used to receiving that, if plucky and self-willed, he under it may be obstinate or sulky; but if the trainer proceeds quietly and firmly, and with proper deliberation, unpleasant complications may be avoided.

Each branch of the lesson must be repeated till the puppy will perform reliably.

After he has learned to hold it steadily, walk him about the room and enforce the same steadiness in making him carry the pad as in holding it when he is at rest. If he drops it, observe the same course as before. At such times as he carries it well, praise and pet him. At all times the trainer should observe the same unper-turbed demeanor and quiet tone of voice. Even if there are any unpleasant incidents, the puppy will forget them and take part in the lessons in good faith if treated kindly afterward.

As he becomes proficient in fetching the objects—the ball, cob, etc.—other and heavier objects may be introduced for retrieving practice. At first the puppy may show a violent dislike against grasping feathers. To accustom him to them, some may be tied around the cob, so that by their constant presence he may outgrow his dislike, if such he have.

At last, after he is proficient in the preliminary lessons, he is practised on dead birds, and the discipline in this respect is simply a continuation of the lessons.

The practical application in field work is so similar to that described in the force system that the reader is referred to it for the information. After passing certain elementary stages—the more mechanical stages of fetching and carrying—both systems merge into the same methods. As to the more practical features of field work, they also are fully described in other chapters. The qualities which should be most cultivated are enumerated in the chapter on “The Qualities of a Retriever.”

As before intimated, the permanency of the accomplishment, when taught by this system, is uncertain. The natural retriever generally, at some period of his working life, refuses to retrieve. As the act depended on the dog’s pleasure for its success, so it may terminate at any time he so elects. However obedient he may be when he is about the house or yard, there will come a time, at work in the field or elsewhere, when he will learn that he can disobey. What is to his own advantage he learns quickly and remembers well. Some day, when in his work he has lost the enthusiasm and industry of youth, he may refuse to go into punishing cover or disagreeable marsh to retrieve. In such cases the amateur generally resorts to punishment. The punishment formed no part of the dog’s lessons. He was not taught to retrieve by compulsory methods, and he therefore does not comprehend the trainer’s motive when punishment is administered; but he does know that retrieving has suddenly lost its pleasing features and indeed has be-

come painful. Repeated urgings only serve to demonstrate that he can disobey when he chooses to do so. He is, moreover, quite as likely to consider that he is whipped for gathering the bird as for not doing so.

Nearly all natural retrievers are more or less hard-mouthed, the degree of the fault varying from a sly pinch to gross mutilation. Some dogs, though not necessarily ones taught by this system, do not hesitate to bolt a bird if not in sight of their handler at the time.

To sum up, the method is not at all certain in its results. It requires a long time to teach by it. It is applicable only to young dogs. It is rarely permanently established. It develops many hard mouths. Obedience is by it seldom permanently established. But few men have the time or patience to go through such a protracted course, one entailing so much effort and loss of time to accomplish so little.



## CHAPTER VII.

### **The Force System.**

THE term "force," as applied to this system, is inaccurate and false in its implication, since it implies a system founded and conducted on force. That force is used in this system is true, but it is not a sufficient part of it to give its name to the system.

Force is but a small factor in the dog's education, and that only in the preliminary lessons, to establish obedience in fetching, and also a correct manner in the simple act of carrying.

So soon as the dog will obediently and reliably pick up an object and fetch it to hand, which is the simple mechanical part of the art, the element of force has no further mission and is thereafter abandoned. Afterward the process of developing the dog's intellect and usefulness is much the same as that employed in educating the so-called natural retriever, but with the greater advantage that the frivolity and inefficiency, with the great loss of time inseparable from the amusement method, are avoided.

The same patience, kindness, good temper, knowledge of dog nature and ability to teach are quite as essential in applying this method as in applying any other—

indeed, more so, as the trainer is an active instead of a passive agent, and must know how to properly apply his power.

The "force system" is not necessarily or inherently a cruel system. Any system is cruel if the trainer makes it so. The whip or boot is quite as cruel as anything that can be used, if the trainer so chooses.

It is true that the elementary stages of the force system offer more direct and constant opportunities for cruelty than does the natural method; but, when the trainer punishes merely to gratify his anger, he ceases to be a teacher, and is pursuing a course which is outside of the system or its purposes.

If a trainer is so peculiarly constituted in temperament that he cannot apply this system without losing his temper and making a disgraceful exhibition of himself, let him abandon it and use the more passive system—that is, the natural method.

It may be proper to remark that often the application of the spike collar is cruel only in appearance. Some dogs are naturally both cowardly and obstinate, and will cry out loudly at the slightest hurt.

Timid dogs can be cowed by hurrying their training or punishing them too much, though light punishment, kindly applied, generally establishes obedience without unpleasant intimidation.

The advantages of the force system are many. One of the most important is that the training is permanent, and the dog is therefore a retriever throughout his working life.

It is a serious lesson from the beginning, independently of the dog's inclinations, likes or dislikes,

There is no play about it. The pupil has only recollections of the most exacting and compulsory obedience, all of which are permanent.

It being disassociated from play or disobedience, the progress is uniform, correct and comparatively rapid.

A tender mouth is a certainty when the system is properly taught. Promptness and correctness are also established.

It can be applied successfully alike to old or young dogs, though it should not be applied to a puppy under ten months or a year old.

Only those which have the necessary discipline and self-control are qualified to use this system.

The dog is subjected, under this system, to a thorough conquering and subjugation which he never forgets, and which beneficially affect other branches of his work. Of course, by mismanagement or incompetency, the discipline and good training may afterward be lost.

In respect to the application of the system the abilities of men vary greatly. Some apply it mechanically and seem utterly incapable of reading all the thousand little expressions and acts which denote a dog's intentions. Such men generally get a dog's mentality into a chaotic state instead of teaching him properly. They seem to have no perception of when a dog is really learning or when he is not, nor have they any perception of methods or their application. Their system approximates more to the act of driving nails than to teaching. But the number which cannot succeed, if they observe proper care, is exceedingly small.

In regard to the retriever educated by force, there are some sportsmen who believe that he does his work in

a perfunctory manner, and is unwilling and dispirited. Nothing could be more mistaken. After the dog passes the stage of punishment, by praising him for his good performance he becomes enthusiastic; and further on, when he learns the practical application of retrieving in connection with serving the gun, he is quite as likely to become over fond of it as is his more loosely taught brother of the natural system. Acts at first repugnant to the dog, because they are meaningless to him, are not so when they are understood. Above all, when he learns the use of retrieving in actual field work his doggy delight is unbounded. The mere sight of a gun then produces ecstatic anticipations of his greatest pleasure, expressed in a doggy way by joyous barkings and fantastic capers.

While the ultimate success of the system is a certainty, the length of time required to teach it will vary with the varying ability of men and dogs, teachers and pupils. Some dogs learn quickly and cheerfully, while others may be obstinate, sulky, forgetful, silly or inefficient. The mere act of fetching can generally be taught in less than a month—sometimes, in a mechanical way, in a week.

It is better to apply this system after the dog is a year old. He then has acquired more general knowledge and better powers of observation; and, from having a maturer brain, his perceptions are keener. Still, in applying this system, almost every amateur makes the mistake of attempting to teach the whole of retrieving at one lesson, instead of synthetically teaching it part by part.

I have heard trainers say that they taught dogs to retrieve in one lesson, but such was a confession of unskillfulness, poor judgment and unnecessary haste.

**FIRST LESSONS.**

Let us assume that the dog has arrived at the proper age and is therefore ready for his first lesson. By no means try the system on a young puppy.

But before beginning his education in retrieving it is necessary to get him accustomed and reconciled to wearing the spike collar, and he should have been taught obedience to some of the common and necessary commands, such as "Come in," "Go on," etc. The manner of teaching these orders is elsewhere given under the head of "Incidental Teaching."

In this system there are several distinct stages, each relatively important in its place in teaching, and each one important enough to be thoroughly taught before attempting to teach the next higher stage.

The first stage is passive, and is that wherein the dog merely opens his mouth when he hears the command "Fetch," after a certain amount of training. Obedience is then only associated with punishment, the dog merely understanding that if he opens his mouth he avoids pain.

In the second stage he participates more actively. He is taught to step forward and grasp the object to be retrieved, which is held a few inches in front of him and on a level with his mouth.

In the third stage he is required to grasp the object as it is held lower and lower, lesson after lesson. It may possibly be necessary to keep the object in the same relative position in several lessons. Indeed, perhaps the object cannot be lowered at first more than an inch at a time, and if the dog becomes confused it may be necessary to return to the first stage in which he is proficient and thence begin again. At all events, he should be

thoroughly proficient at one stage before beginning the next.

The fourth stage is to teach the dog to pick up the object from the floor, and this is the most difficult of all. He will, in most instances, put his nose to the object; but, from acting more or less mechanically in the previous stages, he seemingly does not know how to grasp the object. The thoroughness, which should have been observed in the preceding stages, will be felt at this one. If the training has been well done this stage will be taught easily; otherwise it will be extremely difficult to teach, and will require a great deal of unnecessary force to establish—force which would be unnecessary under thorough preliminary teaching.

The fifth and last stage is that wherein the dog is required to go after the object, pick it up and bring it to hand. It is at first placed but a few inches in front of the dog on the floor, and, as he will pick it up reliably, it is placed further and further away, accordingly as he will go the distance and fetch.

These are in a general way the transitional stages. The method will be more minutely described herein-after.

#### **THE FIRST STAGE.**

For an object to retrieve in the first lessons, nothing is better than a corn cob. It is light, easily grasped, inoffensive to the taste and is easily replaced when soiled. A glove or pad made of cloth absorbs the saliva, soon becomes soiled and offensive, and is therefore objectionable.

The collar is placed on the dog's neck, with the running free end of it on the upper side. The relative



THE FIRST LESSON.

positions of teacher and pupil, as shown in the illustration, are right. A piece of half-inch rope, about three feet long, is fastened to the ring of the collar. The trainer grasps it close up to the ring with his right hand and then holds the cob close in front of the dog's nose, where the dog can easily see it.

In accustoming the dog to the spike collar in the lessons given for that purpose, the trainer has learned many of the peculiarities of his pupil. He knows whether he is cheerful and willing, or sulky and obstinate, timid or courageous, etc., and governs himself accordingly.

Let us assume that the trainer and dog are now in position. The trainer says "Fetch" in his ordinary tone of voice, and at the same time gives a jerk on the collar. The dog may cry out, or may be stolidly sulky, or may resentfully struggle, or he may show fight.

If he opens his mouth to cry out, instantly and gently put the cob in it, and slacken the collar at the same moment. Hold the left hand under his jaws and thus keep his mouth closed on the cob. At the same time induce him to hold the cob steadily. Soothe his fears as much as possible, and caress him if he holds the cob well. After a few moments force him to take the cob again. Do not hurry. Do not make the lesson too long. Keep your temper.

The jerk of the collar should be short and sharp—not sufficient to give the dog any forward impetus—and therefore it should not be a long, steady pull which will carry the dog forward or out of his place.

If the dog is sullen, and will not cry out or open his mouth when the collar is jerked, another way of apply-

ing it must be adopted. See that it is snugly about his neck, then grasp it close to his neck with the right hand, which is then turned firmly outward, thus drawing the collar tightly around his neck and shutting off his wind. He will instantly open his mouth. Instantly put the cob in it and at the same time slacken the collar. The pain must instantly cease when there is obedience or a semblance of it. Force the dog to hold the cob by placing a hand under his jaws. If he is stubborn and rejects the cob, a few admonitory jerks of the collar, till the cob is again in his mouth, will make him more observant, and in time will make him wholly so. Repeat the lessons in this manner till he will open his mouth promptly when he hears the order "Fetch." Do not make the lesson too long; do not use loud tones; do not hurry.

If the dog is vicious and offers fight (a rare occurrence) the whip may be brought into play. If he is so fierce as to be dangerous, a rope about ten feet long can be tied to his collar, the other end being tied to a post, tree or fence, etc.; and thus, if he gets out of control of the trainer, the latter can easily step out of his reach, as he cannot follow further than the length of his rope. But the trainer will probably not come across such a dog in the experience of a lifetime.

The relative positions of trainer and pupil, as shown in the illustration, must as near as possible be maintained during the lessons. At first there may be some difficulty in keeping the dog in the desired position. He may sag back apathetically in the collar, or he may lie down, or he may pull back violently when he hears the order "Fetch," thus making a corrective schooling necessary. It is very essential that he stay properly in place.

If he sags back or lies down, jerk him to his place; then let punishment cease instantly.

The whole theory and practice of the art is founded on the infliction of pain when the dog does certain undesirable acts; thus he associates them with pain and avoids them. By associating obedience with the absence of pain it becomes pleasant by contrast.

While different trainers have different methods of causing pain to accomplish the same ends, the application of it is all founded on the same theory. They are not so many distinct methods; they are but variations of the same method. The manner of it may be pinching the nose, or the throat, or the ear, or applying the whip (which is the worst of all); but obedience and its freedom from pain on the one hand, and disobedience with its accompanying pain on the other, are the factors in the method.

Full time and care must be taken to give the dog the necessary opportunities to perceive the associations and purposes of the lessons. He will perhaps develop some resistance, but such is generally brief in its duration. It is seldom that a dog has more than one or two of the obstructive traits which have been enumerated. If he is thoroughly cold and sullen, with no love for his master and no inclination for work, he is not worth the trouble of training. The trainer cannot by art supply the deficiencies of nature.

The first lessons are continued till the dog will open his mouth promptly, and hold the cob reliably and cheerfully when he hears the order "Fetch." Walk him about and teach him to hold and carry the cob reliably without mouthing it. These lessons should be given in a well

ventilated room, thus avoiding any distractions or diversions, or any annoyance from spectators. The room has the further advantage of keeping the dog from cherishing ideas of escape, which he is very likely to have at this stage. At a later stage, when he will fetch reliably to order and without punishment when working within the room, but would escape if without it, the lessons should be continued in it till obedience becomes habitual.

Bear in mind that the first lessons should be short. Under no circumstances should they be continued after the dog gets unpleasantly warm or blown, nor should they be given at such length as to over-weary him.

In summer it is better to give them in the cool of early morning or late in the evening.

The dog perspires through his mouth, and when warm he cannot keep it closed without distress, nor can he then breathe without suffering still greater distress. His performance under such circumstances is poor at the best. Moreover, the first lessons are a great mental and physical strain on a dog, and are therefore exceedingly fatiguing.

Never end the lesson abruptly or with punishment. Lead the dog about for a few moments, praise and reassure him, then take off the collar and praise him some more, thus concluding the lesson pleasantly. If there is any tendency toward a hard mouth, as shown by shutting his jaws hard on to the cob, the fault should be corrected at once. Prepare a device as follows: Through a piece of soft wood about the size of a cob drive some wrought nails and clinch the ends around the outside of it. Put in enough so that he cannot grasp the wood without

somewhere touching the nails with his teeth. After grasping it once harshly he may afterward refuse to retrieve it. If so, force him to do so as at first. Give him much practice on it in his daily lessons. All dogs have an intense dislike to closing their teeth on iron. By thus giving your pupil long-continued schooling he becomes habitually tender-mouthed, a most desirable and useful trait in a retriever, without which he is but of little use.

If he is not tender, prompt and skillful under this system, it is due to the trainer's own negligence or inefficiency. Only by good, thorough and careful training can the trainer hope for correct performance.

#### THE SECOND STAGE.

Having taught the dog to open his mouth promptly to the order "Fetch," the next stage is to teach him to step forward and grasp the cob. At this stage the trainer uses two or three feet of rope, so that the dog is free to step forward when he hears the order. Having now some slack rope, the dog, instead of stepping forward to the order "Fetch," may run behind the trainer and sag back. To correct this the trainer holds his position and whips the dog back to place. The punishment should cease instantly when the dog returns to his place.

His first act of obedience—that is, opening his mouth—is passive and meaningless to the dog, except that he observes that by so doing he avoids pain. The second stage, though crude and simple, requires action on the part of the dog.

The trainer holds the cob a few inches in front of the dog's mouth and on a level with it, where he can both

readily see and grasp the cob. The trainer then gives the order "Fetch," jerking the dog at the same time in a forward direction toward the cob, assisting him to get it in his mouth, yet requiring as much effort on his part as possibly can be evoked, so as to induce him to believe that he grasped it himself. As in the first stage, the moment that the cob is in his mouth the collar must be instantly slackened and punishment cease.

Be deliberate and praise the dog when he has done well. Continue the lessons in this manner till he will, without punishment, step forward and promptly grasp the cob to the order "Fetch." The collar is pulled with a sort of pulling jerk at this stage, just enough to make the dog step forward to grasp the object.

The dog will, at some juncture in the early lessons, hold the cob when the trainer wishes him to release it, he being apprehensive that, if it is not in his mouth, punishment may follow. Reassure him kindly every time he surrenders it. If he will not let go promptly, grasp the end of the cob in the left hand, but do not pull strongly on it. It is unwise ever to attempt to take it by direct force. Being thus prepared, step on the toes of one of his forefeet, holding the cob at the same time in the left hand and commanding him to "Give." Use just pressure enough on his foot to force him to open his mouth. It requires but little pressure to induce him to do so. The act, repeated a few times, will teach him to surrender the cob instantly without punishment when he hears the order "Give." Delivering the cob promptly to order will put a finish to all his work, as he will remember it all his life when he is once thoroughly taught it after this method.

By twirling the cob temptingly and playfully about the dog's nose he may follow it in play and attempt to grasp it. If he will do so it is a gain. Then he can be taught to pick up the cob in a few lessons. Still, too much playfulness should not be encouraged. The lessons should not lose their character of discipline. Cheerfulness is about all that can be maintained in the greater number of instances, and it requires care to sustain it. If too much playfulness is permitted, all the faults of the amusement system are soon introduced.

#### THE THIRD STAGE.

Having the dog trained so that he will walk forward and grasp the cob to order, the next stage is that wherein he is taught to lower his head to grasp the cob. The cob is lowered two or three inches at first, and the dog is forced to grasp it from the new position. He may refuse at first, but the remedy is much the same as in the previous lessons. If the trainer, by moving the cob about the dog's nose, can tempt him to follow it, he can lower it as the dog follows it, and thus quickly and pleasantly teach him to lower his head. Indeed, if the dog takes kindly to the new feature, he will sometimes even pick it up off the floor in a few attempts, if the trainer is tactful and does not hurry over much.

A dog which is really anxious to please requires very little punishment, and there may not be any perceptible stages in his progress; but in most instances the successive stages have to be formally and thoroughly observed.

In this, as in all other stages, avoid such haste and force as flurry or excite the dog. He must have time

and schooling to comprehend his lessons. Hurrying him faster than he can comprehend or remember is a decided loss in training him.

**THE FOURTH STAGE.**

At last the dog will pick up the cob, when it is held on the floor, if ordered to "Fetch;" but if the hand be removed he at first makes mistakes. His eyes have heretofore been guided by following the hand. His eyes may follow the hand at this stage, as he has been accustomed to associate it and its motions with his own acts, and with what he considered the trainer desired him to do. By keeping the hand close to the cob, after the latter is placed on the floor, he is induced to pick it up; and thus, after many repetitions, he gradually disassociates the hand and its movements from the cob, and learns to concentrate his attention on the latter.

The task can be made much easier for the dog if some cross-pieces are put through the ends of the cob, thus making a crude imitation of a toy saw-horse. The cob is thus held up an inch or thereabouts from the floor and cannot roll; when so arranged, the dog can grasp it more easily and quickly. As this device will add much to the success and quickness of the training, besides making it much easier for the dog, it should not be neglected. Hutchinson, in his "Dog Training," recommends the same thing to prevent a dog from picking up a stick by the end. This is generally a difficult stage to teach. There is much trouble in persuading some dogs to lower their heads. Once in a while one will be found which will be exceptionally obstinate. With such punishment is absolutely necessary. It may even be necessary to

introduce the whip. Hold it and the rope in the right hand, and as the collar is jerked tap him on the nose and he will soon lower his head.

#### THE FIFTH STAGE.

After the dog will pick up the cob it may next be thrown a foot or two in front of him and the order simultaneously given to "Fetch." At this juncture a longer check cord should be used. If he does not move forward, give him a jerk to start him forward, and at the same time repeat the order. If the prior stages of the training have been hurried over too rapidly, or if they have been imperfectly taught, the harmful effects will now be more apparent than at any previous stage. From the negligence in the preliminaries, more punishment will now be necessary and under more laborious conditions. Indeed, it may be necessary to return to a prior stage to teach it properly. If the dog is properly prepared this stage is easy. If the trainer has not hurried nor punished the dog unnecessarily, the latter will have bestowed on him his confidence and love. This stage should be thoroughly inculcated by many lessons, regularly given, until the dog is reliably trained to fetch the object promptly without the use of the collar.

Next he should be given practice on a dead bird. It is better to tie some tenpenny nails about it, about a half inch apart, to guard against any attempt at pinching it. If the nails are sewed to two loops of elastic, one loop to go at each end of the bird, they can be quickly slipped on and off the bird when necessary to use them. He will thus be forced to pick up and carry the bird tenderly, and he will not roll or toss it in his mouth. If he

exhibits any tendency toward a hard mouth the precautions mentioned are indispensable.

When he will retrieve the dead bird well, which may require a number of special lessons—as some dogs dislike to touch feathers—he may next be given some practice in the yard or open fields; the yard if there is any disposition to run away, in the fields only when he is fairly trustworthy.

Always guard against the dog's running away, for once he learns that his heels will effect his escape he will for a long while be on the alert to flee, and he will be a much longer while in forgetting that he can do so; or, at least, a long while in refraining from doing so.

Let the training be free from complications. Teach one thing at a time. I remember once seeing a trainer giving lessons in retrieving. He was earnest and industrious, but not observant. After many days of schooling, discouraging in their results, he had advanced the dogs to a point where they would uncertainly go after an object when it was thrown out and the order given to "Fetch." The lessons were conducted in this wise: The cob was thrown out. The dog would start for it, and just before reaching it the trainer would give the sharp command "Drop." The dog was thus checked and confused; he did not know which order to obey. If he did not drop he was punished; if he did drop he was then ordered to "Fetch." When he started to obey he was again ordered to "Drop." It is hardly necessary to add that the lessons were largely made up of violence and confusion. On his erroneous method being pointed out to him, and by subsequently teaching one thing at a time, he made rapid and easy progress.

No slovenly obedience should be accepted. Train the dog to go directly and promptly to the object to be retrieved, and exact that he bring it directly to hand. Some sportsmen are satisfied if the dog brings the bird in and drops it close by. No circuitous fetching, or tossing, or rolling of the bird, or frivolity, should be allowed to pass unreproved or uncorrected. Walking away from the dog will often assist in inducing him to come in in a direct line.

After the dog will fetch reliably, continue the lessons many weeks, so that the training will be indelibly imprinted on his memory, and also to the end that perfect and prompt obedience be established. He is then so habituated to the work that disobedience or shirking never enters his mind.

The finished application of retrieving, with the added features of roading, marking birds and working in the interest of the gun, are learned only in actual work, but the thorough preliminary training has a corresponding thorough effect on the work afield.

In his lessons, or at any time for that matter, avoid working your pupil with a badly broken or ill-mannered retriever. A dog is very imitative. Bad habits are demoralizing. It is natural for a dog to capture his prey by his own efforts, and it is also natural for him to mutilate it. The dog, too, from jealousy, or envy, or rivalry, often works badly.

Some variation in the regular formality may be introduced to develop the dog's intelligence and agility. For instance, the cob may be shown to him, then thrown into the bushes or tall grass, where he can not see it, thereby forcing him to trust to his nose to find it. After a time

the lessons may be made still more difficult by placing one hand over his eyes, thereby preventing him from seeing the object; then throw it into the bushes.

To vary the lessons, they can be given in different places in the open fields or woods. They will force the dog to draw on his own judgment, and will require him to exercise a close watchfulness, which will have a tendency to develop into the desirable accomplishment of marking birds later, when working to the gun.

Finally the dog is given thorough lessons in retrieving birds, substituting them for the cob or glove. He should be perfectly reliable in fetching and carrying before being put at actual field work.

Some schooling may be given him in carrying birds steadily to heel. The trainer may drop a bird, unobserved by the dog, and so time it that he will walk near it. If he picks it up, he should be much praised. If he sniffs it and passes on, the trainer should pretend to find it himself, and his manner should express his pleasure at discovering such a prize, so that the dog's attention and emulation may be excited. The dog is then required to retrieve it. This is repeated at proper intervals of time till he will fetch the bird to a certainty when he runs across it accidentally. If this feature is taught thoroughly in actual work, it will result in many dead and wounded birds being brought to bag of which the shooter knew nothing. By dropping objects and sending the dog back for them, short distances at first, he may be sent back long distances for them after more or less schooling.

As before mentioned, always insist on a perfect retrieve to hand. If you have adopted the method of giving him rewards, do not permit him to hurry through

his work or half do it, in his eagerness to get the reward. Insist on having every detail properly observed. Nothing is more annoying in practical work than the act of the dog in dropping a bird brought half way in, or dropping the bird on the opposite side of a creek; or, when a wounded bird is dropped, necessitating a chase and retrieve on the part of the shooter, or another retrieve of the same bird on the part of the dog.

It is not wise to keep him constantly retrieving the same object. From the cob, train him to fetch and carry larger and heavier objects, so that in actual work he will be able to retrieve any game bird, although he never should be asked to carry anything beyond his strength. He may be trained to fetch a bunch of keys, an egg, a piece of steak, etc., all with equal certainty, and he will fetch any bird—snipe, quail, woodcock, ruffed grouse, prairie chicken, duck, etc.—if the shooter lives in a section where he can give the dog the necessary opportunities to learn. The “natural” retriever will sometimes retrieve but one kind of game.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### **Seeking Dead and Wounded Birds.**

MUCH, in a preliminary way, can be done in the yard lessons in improving the dog's manner of performing when seeking for dead and wounded birds, and which later can be applied in actual field work. He can be taught to use his nose in trailing and also to use his eyes in marking the flight and fall of objects.

The lessons may be given in a room or in the open fields, the latter place being the better, as it more nearly approximates to the conditions of actual work. This part of the education can be taught with advantage during the dog's puppyhood, as it is in accord with his inclinations, is in a way profitable to him, and it requires no punishment; in fact, punishment has no place in teaching it. The method in itself is simple. A common and effective way is to draw a small piece of meat on the ground, a short distance at first, and hide it, letting the dog see where it is hidden. Then the dog is let loose and he soon finds and eats it. By repeating the act a few times he is most eager to enter into a lesson which is so much to his profit and liking.

Next change the lesson. Have an assistant to drag a piece forty or fifty yards, more or less, according as the

puppy shows proficiency, and hide it under a leaf, or some brush, or any convenient cover. Prevent the dog from seeing it dragged and hidden, to the end that he be forced to use his nose. Put him on the trail and let him puzzle it out himself. If he quits, encourage him to further effort, yet make him rely as much as possible on his own unassisted efforts. The purpose is to teach him to do the seeking and finding himself; for in seeking for a wounded bird he will have to trust to his own nose, and therefore he should not, when puzzled, acquire a habit of looking to his handler for aid. By continuing these lessons he will soon learn to locate the meat with extraordinary precision and quickness. He then is taught in like manner to search for a glove or other object.

The trainer associates the order "Find" or "Seek dead" with these lessons, hence the dog soon learns the meaning of the orders.

If the dog is loth to search, pretend to search eagerly for the meat yourself, and if you get it first give him no reward. Make the reward contingent on his success in finding the meat.

Next the lessons may be varied by putting the meat in the fork of a bush, or on a fence, not so high at any time as to be out of the dog's reach. Teach him to make a thorough search and not to be easily discouraged.

At the same time teach him to obey signals of the hand. They are taught by associating them with the orders. In teaching obedience to signals keep him going in the right direction, stopping him when he goes wrong and encouraging him when he goes right. By placing a piece of meat first in one place and then in

another, working him toward them by signal, he will after a time comprehend the meaning of the signals. Let him eat the meat each time that he finds it. Change the scene of the lessons frequently, otherwise he will go directly to the places which he knows, regardless of signals. Teach him to seek a glove or other object in the same manner. At a later period, when he is better advanced, by holding him by his collar or by making him drop, and then throwing a ball into the woods, then sending him to fetch it, he will get practice in both marking and searching.

Once in a while, when the trainer has a wing-tipped bird, if the dog's education is at a stage properly advanced in retrieving, good lessons may be given in trailing it.

All this will tend to give the retriever a low nose, which is the proper carriage of nose for a retriever; but it is radically wrong for the finding dog, as the reader will observe by reading the chapter on the finder-retriever.

However much interest the dog may have shown in the preparatory lessons, it will be tame indeed compared to the eagerness he will show when on game. Of course, he must be thoroughly accustomed to the report of the gun before he is asked to practically retrieve. A gun-shy dog is not fit to work on birds.

He must also be trained to steadiness to shot if he is a finder-retriever, and it is better that he be so if he is a special retriever. Still a dog which at first is permitted to break shot learns to mark his birds quicker and with wonderful precision. Wounded birds should always be gathered with promptness.

## CHAPTER IX.

### **Incidental Training.**

STEADINESS should be thoroughly inculcated. The young retriever will at first be over eager, or even riotous. To search in a correct manner and with proper deliberation, he is taught to exercise moderation in his movements. If he is excited and impetuous, put a check cord on him, by which he can be forced to go slower; or a couple of pieces of wood, one fastened on each side of his collar, and long enough to reach to his knees, will, by rapping them, force him to go slow. It sometimes requires long effort to teach the dog to work at the proper gait.

It is necessary to have the dog steady to shot. The natural manner of the dog in pursuit of prey is to rush in and capture. He can only be taught steadiness by the most unremitting discipline.

It is really the easiest educational part to teach, and at the same time the most difficult one for the amateur. It should, however, be accomplished by degrees and not all at once, as is too frequently attempted.

By scolding and returning the dog to the place whence he broke, and by slight punishment, he gradually learns that breaking shot is wrong. If he is trained to drop

promptly to order, such will materially assist in establishing stanchness. A warning "Hi, hi," when he starts to break, followed by correction according to the disposition of the dog, will in time generally accomplish the end sought.

When the habit of unsteadiness has been confirmed, more rigorous measures are necessary. By long habit the confirmed shot-breaker has an entire disregard of orders or the consequence of disobedience. Then, at this juncture, the check cord and spike collar come into use. The former should be about three-eighths of an inch in diameter and from fifteen to twenty feet long, those being the most effective lengths. The braided kind of cord, such as is used for window sash, is the best, as it will not kink or untwist.

Have a small iron snap, such as harness-makers use, on the end of the check cord, so that it can be quickly fastened to the dog's collar. It can be left on the collar all the while if the dog is extremely self-willed. If he breaks shot resolutely, shoot at the birds and let him run to the full length of the check cord, thus bringing him up with a jerk. Do not by jerking add any to the shock made by his own momentum. That of itself is enough. It is a severe lesson, and but two or three at most are required to effect a complete cure.

After the snubbing, pull him back to the place where he should have remained and give him a few cuts with the whip, at the same time saying "Steady," etc., to impress upon him the lesson.

If, however, the dog is exceptionally headstrong and incorrigible, let the trainer induce a friend to do the shooting, and then he can, as aforementioned, devote his

time solely to his dog. The latter will not run in many times on repeated and severe snubbings.

There are certain other branches of education which are not directly a part of retrieving, but which are essential to it. These will be briefly touched upon for the information of the amateur.

#### **"HEEL."**

In upland shooting it is necessary to have the dog walk at heel at such times as the shooter so desires. This is easily taught if the lessons are regularly repeated. A cord five or six feet long is attached to the dog's collar, and he is led by it either in the yard or in the fields. When he attempts to pass to the front, as he constantly will on one side or the other, the trainer gives him a sharp cut with the whip and drives him behind, at the same time giving the command "Heel." If he pulls too hard on the ordinary kennel collar, put on the spike collar merely to prevent the pulling. A motion of the hand to the rear is a signal soon learned, and is equivalent to the order "Heel." By associating it with the order, the dog soon observes its application.

#### **"COME IN."**

When the trainer desires that the dog will cease work and come to him, he gives the order "Come in," and in some systems the dog is then given a palatable morsel to eat. But the most direct and lasting method is to apply the spike collar, if he is at all backward in obedience. On it have a rope ten or fifteen feet long. Give the order "Come in." Let him struggle till he is convinced that he is mastered, which commonly will be in a few moments. It also is a good lesson in accustoming him

to the spike collar. While the dog is struggling the trainer passively holds the rope and takes care that the dog does himself no injury. No pulling on the collar at this juncture is desirable or necessary.

After this flurry is over he will generally show some alarm or bewilderment, but he will sit passively. Give him a few moments in which to collect himself before resuming; then quietly order him to "Come in," pulling gently at the same time on the cord. He will have another struggle, but it probably will be briefer. After he is done struggling, give him a few more minutes to recover from his alarm. Do not hurry and do not use any active force. Do not, above all, permit yourself to get angry. After a few repetitions he will not struggle when he hears the order "Come in," and then enough has been accomplished for the first lesson.

The next lesson will find him less violent. If he struggles, the trainer should, as before, be a passive force till his struggles cease. Then he gives the order "Come in," and at the same time pulls the dog steadily to him without any violent jerking.

If the dog is at all timid, he should be handled with the greatest care and consideration. It is harmful to frighten him or to punish him unnecessarily.

But if he be headstrong and naturally obstinate or ill-tempered, some hurting will do him good in reducing him to subjection; hence a few jerks, discreetly applied, will expedite his training. He should, however, always have time enough, between his struggles, to collect himself and recover from his alarm.

It is well to have this command thoroughly taught before the retrieving lessons are begun, as it serves a

double purpose in accustoming the dog to the collar and in establishing obedience to a useful command. Moreover, the retrieving lessons are very complex to the dog when taught even in their simplest forms, therefore all confusion should be avoided.

When he comes in to the order, whether voluntarily or by force, praise and caress him, the same as in all other instances in which he does well, or in which he has the appearance of doing well.

Always make it a point to be good friends with him. When he so fears his handler or so dislikes to be in his company that he is either in constant fear or inclined to run away, there is something wrong in the handler's application of the system.

#### **"GO ON" OR "HIE ON."**

"Hie on" or "Go on" are commands easily taught. They are almost always in consonance with the dog's inclination. By associating them with the act of leaving heel, or holding him by his collar and letting him go when the command "Hie on" is uttered, he soon learns its meaning. A click of the tongue, or a snap of the fingers, or a forward motion of the hand, taught by proper association of orders, serves the same purpose as the oral order "Go on."

#### **"DROP" OR "DOWN CHARGE."**

A cord is placed in the dog's collar, by which he is held in place. In this lesson the whip comes beneficially into play. Give the order "Drop," at the same time hitting the dog sharply on the shoulder. Wait a few seconds; then repeat the order and tap with the whip. When he lies down, disregard the manner in which he does it

at first. He may roll over on his back, but that is of no importance at this stage. Repeat the lessons till he will drop to command. At a later time the manner of doing it may be perfected. If he habitually turns over on his back, a few light taps on his stomach with the whip will right him instantly.

As to the signal, he is taught to drop to it by associating it with the command. The hand is held perpendicularly when the oral command is given. In a longer or shorter time he learns its meaning. By tying him to a peg in the open field, giving him fifteen or twenty yards of slack cord, he may be taught to lie steadily in place, while the handler walks around or away from him, by simply taking him back to his place every time that he leaves it, and coincidentally giving him a cut with the whip. He soon under this treatment learns to remain in the proper place. Always be on friendly terms with him when the lesson ends.

**"HOLD UP."**

"Hold up" is the order to the dog to rise from the position of "drop or down charge." It is easily taught. The dog is in most instances eager to rise. A beckon of the forefinger, or the command "Hold up," is soon learned.

If the dog is sulky and refuses to obey, put the spike collar on him, and a gentle pull accompanying the command will bring him to his feet promptly. As in all other lessons, be sure to be on friendly terms with him when the lesson ends.

## CHAPTER X.

### **Wildfowl Retrieving.**

THE preliminary education of the wildfowl retriever is much the same as that of the upland retriever, bearing in mind the modifications necessary in the application of retrieving on land or on water. Nevertheless, all the education given in the preparatory lessons to the upland retriever is not out of place when acquired by the wildfowl retriever.

Few wildfowl retrievers are other than imperfectly educated. In exceptional instances some dogs of rare intelligence pick up an education by experience, but wildfowl retrievers as a class are inferior performers, owing to their defective education.

It requires a higher order of intelligence, physical strength, courage and endurance in a wildfowl retriever than in his brother workman of the upland:—greater intelligence, because the details of his work are more complex and difficult; greater strength, because the birds are heavier and the work in water and mud is more laborious; and greater courage, because there are more formidable conditions of hard cover, muddy footing and ice-cold water to meet.

The dog should therefore be of good size, both be-

cause the work is so difficult and a certain amount of mouth capacity is necessary to enable the dog to grasp the wildfowl, as is also necessary a certain strength of jaw to hold the duck or goose easily when grasped. Small dogs, in their ineffectual attempts to get a larger grip with a mouth too small for the purpose, and also from their weakness of limb, are apt to become hard-mouthed, and they tire quickly in heavy work.

Working to signal should be most thoroughly taught, as it is of great importance in actual shooting, particularly in work on wildfowl. When working in the water, the dog must trust to the signals to determine his direction in seeking the birds; and if he does not understand them, or if he is disobedient, it detracts accordingly from his performance.

A good education in signals also dispenses with the inelegant and uncertain method of throwing rocks out further and further toward the dead or wounded wildfowl, in the effort to give the dog the course to take to the bird. Such, too, gives the dog an opportunity for deception, since he will sometimes pick up a stick or other floating object and as a compromise bring it to the shooter.

The puppy should be accustomed to the water from his youth up. The example of an older dog going into the water will induce almost any young dog to follow. A shore which from shallow gradually grows deeper is the best, as the dog then feels safe at all times, and learns to swim readily. He takes great delight in fetching out sticks, though such practice is very apt to give him a hard mouth.

For the first lessons, select a sheet of water which is

reasonably free from floating substances, so that the dog will only have the thrown object on which to fix his attention; otherwise, if he fails to find the object readily, he will fetch in the first convenient piece of rubbish, with a great affectation of having brought in the right thing. If he at any time brings in a wrong object, quietly ignore it. Do not deceive him by throwing out stones or other objects which will sink. When he goes to the place where he saw the splash and finds nothing, it will not tend to strengthen his confidence in his trainer or his interest in the work. Nor is it wise to ask him to fetch unreasonably heavy objects, such as large sticks, or even fence rails, which boys sometimes try a dog's powers upon.

If the dog has had good schooling in carrying inanimate objects about the weight of a heavy duck, there is but little difficulty in finishing his education in practical work on wildfowl. After he is taught to fetch a duck on land, it is not much trouble to teach him to fetch it from water.

The disagreeable habit which some dogs have of dropping the bird the moment that they are on land (which may be a bar of the river, or a muddy flat in the marsh, or the opposite shore) should not be tolerated. Nothing but delivery to hand should be accepted, from the beginning of the training to the end.

The following of crippled birds, the retrieving of wounded ones before retrieving the dead ones, the marking of birds, etc., will, for the proficiency of your pupil, depend on his intelligence, experience, enthusiasm for work and the keenness of his scenting powers; for, owing to the difficulties surrounding wildfowl shooting,

the practical efforts of the shooter to teach are confined to a narrow scope.

At this stage the principles of the "natural method" are particularly applicable. Praise and caress the puppy when he does well, make a companion of him, and do not forget his comfort on the cold days; and on the cold nights of the cold days when he has worked hard, see that his dinner is ample and that his bed is good; else he may suffer discomfort and hardship, and have the twinges and lameness of rheumatism in return for having given you a pleasant day. Moreover, he has earned good treatment.

As in training for upland shooting, the retriever should be thoroughly trained to fetch, in the preliminary lessons.



## CHAPTER XI.

### **The Irish Water Spaniel.**

THE Irish water spaniel is, in a measure, neglected in this country, though he is a very useful retriever, and very companionable and loyal to his master. They are zealous in work and sufficiently strong to do it well.

About fifteen years ago Mr. J. S. Skidmore wrote of this breed, that "To a sportsman of limited means, or one who has not accommodation to keep a team, the Irish water spaniel is the most useful dog he can have, inasmuch as he can be made to perform the duties of pointer, setter, retriever and spaniel; but, as his name implies, he is peculiarly fitted by temperament and by a water-resisting coat for the arduous duties required by a sportsman whose proclivities lie in the direction of wildfowl shooting. In this branch of sporting they have no equal, being able to stand any amount of hardship; this, combined with an indomitable spirit, leads them into deeds of daring from which many dogs would shrink. Many are the feats recorded of their pluck, sagacity and intelligence. To a well-bred and trained specimen no sea is too rough, no pier too high and no water too cold; even if they have to break the ice at every step, they are not damped, and day after day they will follow it up,

being of the 'cut-and-come-again sort.' As a companion for a lady or gentleman they have no equal, whilst a well-behaved dog of the breed is worth a whole mint of toys to the children, he allowing the little ones to pull him about by the ears, to roll over and over with him, to fetch their balls as often as thrown for him, and to act as their guard in times of danger. . . . Their dam, Juno, was also as tender-mouthed and as clever a retriever as any sportsman could wish to be master of; but I will freely admit that some of the breed have been made hard-mouthed, and so also have hundreds of retrievers, from the same cause. The Irish water spaniel, as everyone knows who has owned one, is never satisfied unless he is doing something to please his master; for this reason he is kept as a companion, and taught to carry a stick, fetch stones, balls, etc. This kind of education it is which causes them to be hard-mouthed, especially if this is done before they have been taught to retrieve game. They are high-couraged like the Irish setter, and, like them also, when well broken, cannot be beaten."

Of this breed Mr. P. T. Madison wrote in the "American Book of the Dog" as follows: "One of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, retrievers of which we have any knowledge is the Irish water spaniel.

"The breed consists of two distinct varieties, peculiar to the north and south of Ireland. The northern dog has short ears, with little feather either on them or on the legs, but with a considerable curl in his coat. In color he is generally liver, but with more or less white, which sometimes predominates, so as to make him decidedly white and liver."



*Un chasseur au vol et son chien dans l'herbe.*

*Reproduced by kind permission of the Proprietor.*

### CHASSEUR DE POULETS AVEC LE CHIEN.

(Picture said to be nearly 200 years old, showing ancient manner of upland shooting.)

In a pamphlet published in 1881 Mr. J. H. Whitman, Chicago, at that time a breeder of Irish water spaniels, wrote:

"This breed of spaniels has now been so long bred in this country that I have no hesitation in saying to the sportsman who desires a really first-class retriever for wildfowl, there is none superior if equal to them for retrieving ducks, brant and geese, etc., from land or water. I never saw a breed of dogs that seemed to enter into the sport with more zeal, and to whom the temperature of the water made no difference. I have retrieved duck with them when ice would form on their coat on reaching shore; still they were always ready to go. I never saw more intelligence in any breed of dogs; they can be taught tricks as easy as a poodle, and in duck shooting they soon learn that a duck shot dead and falling in the water can be retrieved at any time; consequently where two are dropped, one dead and one wounded, so far as my experience goes, they invariably go for the wounded one first. The great trouble with most of the hunting dogs of the present day is, they are not *thoroughly* trained. Let anyone who wants a really first-class dog for field work, either setter, pointer or spaniel, try and purchase one; they will be offered for sale in unlimited numbers, but, with very few exceptions, none will be warranted to suit or really perform all that a thoroughly broken dog should do, or the money refunded. I attribute this to the fact that many expect to get a perfect dog for a song. Thoroughly broken dogs are valuable, and from one to two hundred dollars is not an unreasonable price for a well-bred and *perfectly broke dog.*"

## CHAPTER XII.

### The Chesapeake Bay Dog.

WITHOUT drawing any invidious comparisons, I believe that the Chesapeake Bay dog as a retriever is a most formidable rival of the Irish water spaniel, with some points of excellence in his favor. For instance, he is a stronger and more compactly built dog, larger in size, and with wonderful constitutional powers of resistance to the fatigue and hardship of wildfowl retrieving.

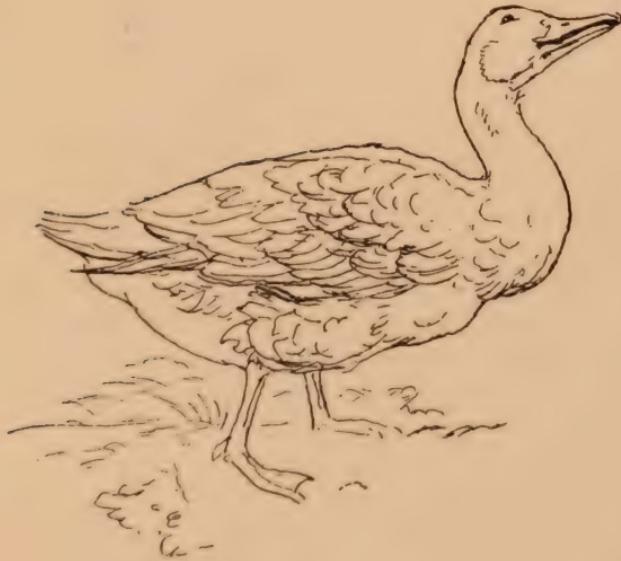
It is cause for much regret that this most excellent dog is not brought more universally into the work of duck retrieving.

The history of the origin of the breed has been many times told, and it seems to be accepted as authentic. An English brig was in a sinking condition when found by the ship *Canton*, of Baltimore, Md., in the year 1807. The crew was rescued and returned to England, but the two puppies, a dog and bitch, which too were taken from the sinking vessel, were taken to Baltimore, and this brace were the progenitors of the breed. In color the dog was a poor red; the bitch was black. They were respectively called Sailor and Canton. The breed was probably from out-crosses, as history recounts that Sailor and Canton were separated, and their progeny became famous in the

annals of wildfowl shooting on the rough, icy waters of the Chesapeake Bay and vicinity. Their endurance was phenomenal, and their performance was no less so.

The Chesapeake Bay dog is remarkably intelligent, and physically of extraordinary bone and muscle, and they are said to be indefatigable in work, and persistent in fetching to bag the most difficult birds.

But no breed has been more neglected. Save the energetic efforts of a few breeders, nothing has been done for its public advancement. There is no dog of equal interest which has so little literature devoted to it, though none have so sensational an origin, nor have any others a field of practical usefulness wherein abounds so much interesting incident from which to make good history.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### **Handling Retrievers.**

THE best of training will not insure against the subsequent spoiling of the retriever when he is subjected to careless or unskillful handling. If the shooter breaks shot himself and hurriedly struggles to get possession of the dead or wounded bird before the dog can do so, the latter is almost certain to copy the hasty and bad manner of his master. If the dog is used to retrieve sticks and stones in careless play, he may use the same hard-mouthed manner in actual work.

If the shooter does not know how to handle a trained retriever, it is wise to study the subject and practise carefully till he can do so, or to have some experienced shooter to teach him the proper methods.

A brace of retrievers is not necessary in working on game; but, as some sportsmen use a brace of dogs in seeking for live birds, it is therefore necessary to control both such dogs when the time comes to retrieve.

Under no circumstances should two dogs be sent at the same time to retrieve, though there is no fault more common. Two dogs are always jealous or selfishly intent on getting possession, violently so if necessary to succeed. They, when retrieving at the same time, almost always

mutilate the bird, and a hard mouth and reckless manner may result from such careless methods.

When a brace of retrievers is hunted together, they should be most thoroughly and reliably taught to drop to order and remain so till ordered on. Only one should be permitted to retrieve, the other in the meantime being held in restraint. Thus, when the bird is killed, one dog is ordered to drop, and the other is sent to retrieve. As to the manner of teaching obedience to the command "Drop," the information is given in another chapter.

If the dogs are both finders and retrievers, and if they drop to shot, by merely looking intently at one and giving a slight signal, as for instance a quiet nod of the head, that dog, if properly schooled, will immediately start to retrieve. In like manner the other one will retrieve.

If the signal is not used, either dog should be taught to go for the dead bird when the handler looks at him and calls out his name, the name when so used serving the same purpose as a command. It, too, has the particular advantage of being individual, each dog's name thus serving, in that manner and circumstance, as a command to himself alone; thus it does not embarrass his brace-mate at all.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### **English Retrievers.**

BY CAPT. C. E. M'MURDO.

WITHIN the last few years the increase in the number of sportsmen who can appreciate the difference between high-class and common work, in pointers and setters, has been so great that the objection of having the style of their dogs injured by retrieving is pretty generally felt; and a demand for dogs specially bred and trained for that purpose is the result.

Retrievers have been in general use in Great Britain for about a century, I believe, and there are several fine strains of them now in existence the puppies of which take to their work as naturally as well-bred pointers and setters do to theirs, only requiring experience and careful training to make them perfect.

It would be very difficult to estimate the value of a really first-class retriever.

The retriever's disposition is to be with his master at all times, to protect him and his from any one or anything that threatens to harm them.

Then he is ever ready and proud to carry a basket or parcel, and, if a glove or anything is accidentally dropped, very little teaching will make him understand that he has to take his master's back track till he finds it.

As watch dogs they are excellent because their intelligence enables them to know when it is desirable to give the alarm and when not. What is more annoying than to have a dog that barks at everything he sees or hears?

At one time I owned a retriever bitch and several other dogs, and, however much the latter barked, so long as the former did not do so, I found by experience that there was no necessity for me to turn out.

As companions and watch dogs, no other breed can surpass them, and as all-round shooting dogs they are certainly the most useful kind.

Retrieving from land and water is, of course, their special calling; but what dog understands so well how to beat out a thicket and drive the game toward the guns? or to follow along a watercourse covered with weeds and brush, keeping parallel with his master?

In the open, if allowed to keep a few paces in advance, he will seldom fail to give warning if birds are ahead. Some point game, others show by their earnest manner that they are aware of its presence.

To train a retriever for land work, he should be commenced upon when about ten months old, and taught to keep to heel (about a yard behind and to the left). A cord with two straps to it, one attached to the trainer's belt and the other to the dog's collar, answers the purpose. Except for a few minutes after first being let out he should be habituated to keep to heel under all circumstances till told to go.

Some dogs will paw you gently to attract attention when they think you have forgotten to give them leave to go off after a wounded bird. Till he can follow up wounded game quickly and surely, he should not be al-

lowed to retrieve any dead game. Plenty of time must be given him to find his bird, and he should be encouraged, and, if necessary, helped to do so. A pup which does not keep his head down, but tries to make short cuts by use of the body scent, is not likely ever to make a good one.

A dog of the right sort will run through a covert full of game, and never pay attention to any scent except that of the wounded game at first started after.

As regards picking up and carrying, he should do so gently, not ruffling a feather. A perfect retriever is the greatest luxury a sportsman can possess; for it saves him all trouble and loss of time in bagging his game, as he can go on hunting with his other dogs, which, if taught to drop to shot (as they should do when a retriever is used), will not interest themselves about the dead birds. It will also be found that they will make fewer flushes than if they were in the habit of retrieving.

I once owned a particularly intelligent retriever, by name Sultan, and I think that, by giving an account of a few of his performances, a fair idea of the capabilities of his breed will be conveyed to the readers. He was a very handsome dog, with a flat coat; in color rather a bright liver, and he weighed sixty pounds. From the time that he was eight months old he was my constant companion. He slept on a mat in the hall, and, when his feet were muddy, was very particular about remaining on it. He never entered a room without invitation, but would at times peep in at an open door, and if I said, "Come in and shut the door," he would enter at once, wagging his tail, and then turn around and push the door to with his front paw.

A hedgehog resided in our garden, and he and Sultan eventually became great friends. The latter used to bring him to me about once a day, and deposit him at my feet, and the hedgehog got so accustomed to him that he did not make a ball of himself, as is the habit of these animals. After a time we gave the hedgehog away, and the disappearance of his friend disturbed Sultan's mind sadly. He hunted for him everywhere, but in vain, and the first time afterward that I took him out walking he scoured the woods and hedges till he found a new one, which he brought to me with great glee.

When driving to and fro from my shooting grounds, he would protect any of my other dogs from the attacks of the roadside curs, always jumping on them at the right moment.

Whenever I happened to shoot a hare and intended to return within half a mile of the same place, I used to hang it up on a bush, and, when I got to the nearest point to it on my return, would send Sultan for it. Sometimes he would stop and appear to think for about half a minute before starting, then would rush off at full gallop, and I never knew him fail to catch me up with it before I got home.

He never would steal anything himself, nor allow any other dog to do so. The most amusing thing I ever saw him do was on a fine summer's evening, when a party of children were to have a picnic in a grove. I was invited by a lady (who was accompanied by her white fluffy lap dog) to stroll down and see the children enjoying their repast. When we arrived the lap dog immediately began a minute inspection of the viands. Sultan, after looking at him in evident horror and amazement for a few seconds,

quietly stepped on tiptoe after him took him up by the skin of his back, and when quite clear of the table-cloth gave him a good shaking and deposited him on the ground.

Sultan's intelligence showed itself equally well in the field. When used as a spaniel, he would always endeavor to drive the game toward me.

Solid black or dark liver are the best colors.

In shape they should be rather long and low. For this country, the smaller the better; but it is difficult to get them under fifty pounds.

I prefer the flat, hard coat, though the curly is probably equally good.

I have purposely avoided mentioning any particular strains of retrievers as being specially good, for I know that any one wishing a first-class one must have it selected. As we want level-headed and not rattle-headed ones, we must beware of those that are inbred. Many of the best looking ones are utterly worthless, having been bred for the bench show instead of the field.

## CHAPTER XV.

### **Qualities of the Retriever.**

RETRIEVING is laborious work, hence the retriever should be physically strong, and enduring and industrious.

The work has ever changing complications and difficulties, hence a good brain and keen powers of observation are also requisites.

And the dog's capabilities, to be of use to the sportsman, must be under his control and intelligently applied, which are results accomplished by training.

Sportsmen as a class are thoroughly conversant in the qualities which are essential to a good finding dog, yet they are satisfied in most instances with a very sloppy performance on the part of a retriever.

Every dog will not make a good retriever. The mere act of picking up an object and fetching or carrying it well is not all of retrieving. Such act is the simplest part of the accomplishment. The good retriever must be proficient in much more. His intelligence cannot be too great, and without it he cannot understand the nicer details of the work and cannot manage it understandingly.

A keen nose is absolutely essential. If the sense of

smell is imperfect or absent, his performance as a retriever is impaired accordingly.

The retriever must have a tender mouth—a requisite which can always be established in the preliminary training, regardless of the dog's predispositions. A retriever which mutilates or eats his birds is worse than no retriever.

He should have a pleasant disposition. He should work with cheerfulness, persistency and method. A hard-headed, obstinate dog can be tolerated as a finding dog if he have otherwise good qualities, but he is particularly unpleasant and undesirable as a retriever. He should be faithful and zealous in his work to the gun.

He must be properly educated. When so perfected, he requires very little supervision when working. He should mark closely the flight of birds. When he has this accomplishment, he can notice the slightest irregularity in their flight, and he can discriminate between the motions of a wounded bird and one which is unhurt. He is skillful in marking birds and remembering where they fall. The good retriever has little occasion to do much searching, since, by his constant watchfulness and skill in marking, he goes to the birds quickly and accurately.

The highest attainments are not acquired in perfection in one season. They are the result of ample experience, though good work may be done before knowledge of marking is acquired.

But dogs display many of the traits of mankind, and while one may be intelligent and capable, he may be too lazy to seek for dead birds, or indifferent to work after he loses interest, or he may be fonder of searching for live birds than for dead ones.

Size and strength, too, are necessary, particularly in

wildfowl retrieving. A small or weak dog cannot endure the work. In upland retrieving the tax on the dog's strength is not so great as in retrieving on the marshes or from water, though for such work all dogs should be strong and vigorous. Any light or weak dog can retrieve quail, snipe or woodcock; but for ruffed grouse and prairie chicken retrieving a dog of fair size and strength is preferable, with the necessary capacity of mouth to hold the bird properly—a matter of importance in itself. On hot days, when retrieving, the small, light dog labors hard in running through grass, weeds and cover, with nothing to carry other than himself.

Many of the setters of the present day are too light for retrieving, they being small in size, light in bone and muscle—puny things, mere toys, fit only for gentle, light work in nice fields for short whiles in pleasant weather. A heavy bird, such as a prairie chicken, overtasks a light dog's strength, as he shows by tottering or reeling when in the act of carrying it, or by dragging instead of carrying it.

Retrieving from water is severe work for even the hardier and stronger breed of Irish water spaniels and Chesapeake Bay dogs. No setter or pointer which the owner prizes for his capabilities in upland work should be required to retrieve wildfowl from water. The exposure to the cold, chilling water and stiff winds in a freezing temperature, and the straining work incident to carrying heavy wildfowl over muddy bottoms or through heavy grass, are in time sure to induce stiffness, rheumatism, deafness or premature old age, or all combined. Thus the setter's or pointer's usefulness is impaired, or at least his working years are lessened. Many setters and

pointers dislike wildfowl retrieving, while others perform excellently well.

In respect to what constitutes a retriever, field trials have been peculiarly misleading, since, from their standards, the retrieving was always subordinate to the importance of finding the birds, and was valued much less in the scale of points. The act of retrieving, therefore, was hurried over and was almost always slovenly done, the mere act of lifting the bird and fetching it in, being about all that was considered. As a substitute for a retrieve, many times a bird has been thrown in the air in an open place, the gun then was fired and the dog ordered to retrieve. Nothing could be more insufficient as a test or more misleading in its implication. The work of the perfect retriever was rarely displayed, and the opportunities for good performance were extremely limited in the hurry and scramble of field-trial competition which obtained when retrieving was considered a competitive quality. The time, too, was short, hardly adequate to the exigencies of the competition.

The field trial, properly considered, is for setters and pointers in their capabilities as finding dogs—qualities which are largely peculiar to them; while, so far as retrieving is concerned, almost any dog can be taught it to the degree exacted of the setter or pointer. Moreover, for reasons fully set forth in the chapter on the finder-retriever, the trainers did not care to have their finding dogs worked much as retrievers.

The dog's capability of receiving instruction and acquiring knowledge by observation are greatly increased by giving him all possible liberty. Without it he never can be a first-rate performer.

The dog's love for his master is a potent factor in training which the trainer should not ignore. If the trainer does not so treat the dog as to win his affection, success above mediocrity cannot be attained. Let the dog once become indifferent to this handler, or become afraid of him, or dislike him, and the dog's educational advancement is impaired accordingly. His performance under such circumstances seldom goes beyond perfunctory effort. If he loves his master, he will often work on to gratify his master's wishes even when greatly fatigued.

Pointing dead is hardly proper to consider under the head of retrieving, since it is not a retrieve at all. It is hardly worthy of the trainer's consideration, except in so far as it will guard against the faults entailed by retrieving, as mentioned in the chapter devoted to the finder-retriever. But, even if the trainer desires to teach it, only a small number of dogs can be so taught, and of that number the greater part will be found deficient in energy, and some in sense. If the dog will point dead, it is a very inefficient act at best: first, because many birds will fall in thick cover out of sight of the shooter, or on marshy ground; second, it requires much loss of time in searching for dead and wounded birds; third, because a dog rarely maintains the excellence of his performance, be the same poor or good, even if he maintains it at all.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### **The Finder-Retriever.**

In this country many sportsmen require their dogs to both find and retrieve, thus combining in one dog the double duties of finding and retrieving—that is to say, to find the live birds, and to retrieve the dead and wounded ones. The methods of finding, as compared with those of retrieving, are sharply distinct and different, and they are therefore important matter for consideration.

The combining of finding and retrieving introduces some complexities into the subject and also brings it into controversial grounds. On the one side, some very good sportsmen warmly advocate that the dog doing both the finding and retrieving does not thereby impair his efficiency in either branch. In most instances such advocates have not given the matter proper thought, or their experience has not been sufficiently extensive. A man may go on in a narrow groove for a lifetime and still have but little experience, since it has been confined to the same methods at the end as were practised at the beginning.

For upland shooting, setters and pointers are used to find the birds, and in this country they are also required to retrieve. For this common usage there are

some special reasons, based chiefly on the score of economy and expediency, among which may be mentioned that the average sportsman owns but one or two dogs, therefore he must require them to be as useful as possible. Again, many owners have skill enough to handle one dog well, or passably so. Two dogs, one a finder, the other a retriever, would be outside of the handling skill of the average sportsman. Then again there are certain sections, as in parts of the North, wherein game is so scarce, so difficult to kill owing to natural environment, and the open seasons are so short, that but a small number of birds falls to one gun in a season. The most diligent day's work will rarely result in other than meager returns to the shooter. For such shooting it would not be worth while to keep a special retriever.

But even in sections where game is abundant the all-round working dog, the one of superior ability, makes a good showing, though rarely the best showing, as much retrieving has a tendency to impair his powers of finding, or much finding has a tendency to impair his retrieving powers.

The special retriever is not in general accord with the sporting customs of this country, though he could be used with advantage. That he will have a place in the sport of the future is certain. The signs of the times indicate that the trend of sport is in that direction.

The game birds of the United States are being killed with reckless wastefulness. They never will be exterminated, but their widespread destruction will mark a distinct era in the evolution of our sportsmanship; for, as the destruction progresses, the private game preserve interposes to save the game. At the same time it

withdraws the shooting privileges from public use, and justly so.

With the game preserve comes the need of a keeper and trainer, and birds then being more abundant, and special skill in training being more easily secured and at a cheaper rate, the special retriever will then be a factor in shooting.

From the multiplication of game preserves in the past few years, the special retriever may not be so far away in the future. He is a dog of true merit.

It is not intended to imply that there are no sportsmen in this country who know the value of the special retriever. Unfortunately, however, nearly every owner is wedded either by education or habit to the exclusive use of the finder-retriever, and the latter has his first consideration from association, education, use, experience and habits of sport. With these, too, is added something like national prejudice, every nation being inclined to believe that its own institutions are the best. In England the special retriever is a favorite. It is rather hasty to assume that the sportsmen of that country do not know what is correct in practical sport afield. The conditions of shooting in the two countries are radically different as compared with each other. With some centuries of practice, it is not wise to assume that the sportsmen of England do not know what serves their purpose best. It is more reasonable to assume that concerning them a gentleman who has but a theoretical knowledge might be mistaken.

Now, having set forth fairly the reasons why it is desirable to have a dog both to find and to retrieve, it is proper to show the inherent faults of the practice.

It adds greatly to a dog's fatigue in serving the gun, and it also adds greatly to his mental effort in acquiring such an extensive double education. The general standard of what a dog should know about field work is his owner's knowledge of it, which, in respect to himself, may have been the result of years of experience.

Considering the short life of the dog and the various imperfect methods of training to which he is subjected (for the skillful trainers educate but a small portion of the dogs in use), it is a source of wonder that the dogs make so good a showing.

When in training, many puppies, and betimes old dogs, take an immoderate delight in capturing dead or wounded birds, and even are much gratified to have them in possession. Sometimes they are over eager, and therefrom spring many bad traits, of which breaking shot is the most common. Punishment for that fault may impede all parts of the puppy's education or mar the aged dog's work; for if the punishment is too severe, it may result in bird shyness or blinking.

Even if steadied properly to shot, many dogs acquire an annoying and harmful habit of running riot, heedless of consequences, when sent on after the gun is fired, and this regardless of whether a bird has been killed or not. At such times the shooter has no control over his puppy, and he must discontinue work till either the puppy is satisfied or till he can induce him to desist and go on. The puppy, when thus riotous, is heedless of the live birds which may be scattered about, and he flushes right and left with reckless indifference. In most instances, if the dog is intelligent, this fault disappears with age, training and experience. A few dogs retain the fault throughout

their working life, as the dog likes to retrieve better than to find, as it is all the difference between the attempt and success.

But the most important reason against the dog both finding and retrieving is that it affects his best manner of working on live birds. The best manner of using his nose in finding is distinctly different from the best manner of using it in retrieving.

In searching for live birds, or in drawing to them to locate and to establish a true point on them, the dog carries a high nose, or at least he keeps his nose off the ground unless he is a rank potterer. The scent in the air is his guide. By carrying a high nose and tacking, or taking a zigzag course to and fro rapidly across the trail of a bevy, he can draw quickly to its hiding-place or overtake the birds and point them. If he puts his nose to the ground to pick out the foot-scent, he is tangled in a maze of trails; he moves forward slowly, potters to and fro, forward and back, often loses the trail altogether; or the birds perhaps run entirely away from him. Or, if he gets to the birds, he makes many awkward flushes from his inability to locate them, and is never certain in any part of his work as a finding dog. In trailing a single bird he meets with better success, as there is then but one bird to follow; but the manner is bad in that the dog's efforts are sure many times to end in flushes.

Intelligent dogs guard against a flush by raising their noses as they approach the bird, thus finally locating and pointing by the body scent. A dog which puts his nose to the ground in roading running birds is never a good pointing dog. The high-nosed dog follows the aggregation of scent in the air, disregarding single trails entirely.

Take, as illustrative of this quality, a matter which refers entirely to the sense of sight instead of the sense of smell. Let the reader imagine a flock of sheep crossing a dusty plain. Anyone could easily follow them from a long distance in the rear by simply noting the cloud of dust, which, in a manner, is analogous to the scent left on the trail by a bevy of running birds. But, if the pursuer were to attempt to follow by picking out the footprints here and there on the dry plain, it would be a slow and tiresome task, which might result in failure.

The dog which carries his nose close to the ground while trailing a bevy by foot-scent picks his way slowly, with many stops and backward flings, to work some part of the trail over and over again before he can hit off the true direction, and then with many repetitions of the puzzled efforts. In bad weather, when the birds are wild and restless, they will run faster than the potterer can follow, and the trail will get cold while he is endeavoring to work out the puzzles.

Yet, ill as is the manner for the finding dog, the low nose is the correct manner of a retriever.

Granting now that a dog performs on live birds in the best manner (that is, with a high nose), it is an easy matter to mar his manner, or sometimes even to change it to an inferior one. Indeed, it requires skillful handling at all times to guard against a finding dog carrying a low nose, either betimes or habitually. Every skillful trainer endeavors to train his dog to work with a high nose on live birds.

So much in respect to the setter and pointer as bird finders.

The best manner of the retriever will now be con-

sidered. His work, considering it solely in reference to the using of his nose, is either searching for dead birds or following wounded birds by foot-scent. If he is a good retriever, he will search with a low nose. Indeed, if he carry a high nose after the manner of the finding dog, he necessarily is an inferior retriever. His work is radically distinct from that of the finding dog.

The retriever as such never has any work on bevvies. All his trailing at one time is confined to a single bird. The intent is to find the bird as soon as possible. Unlike the finding dog when roading, he has nothing to consider in respect to pointing or flushing. As the course of a wounded bird is often erratic, it is necessary that the retriever follow it truly, for the bird may run under some cover and die, and every moment's delay then adds to the difficulty of finding it. The scent of a dead bird freshly killed is much less than that of the live bird, as the reader can readily infer when it is considered that the breath and exhalations from the live body are absent; hence again the need of the retriever carrying a low nose. All sportsmen have seen setters and pointers carrying a high nose pass directly over a dead bird, without any consciousness of its proximity. Only by passing some distance down wind of it would the scent be recognized. Frequently the high-nosed retriever fails to find the dead bird if the conditions are unfavorable. Nor is this strange when it is considered that he is using a manner which is correct for finding, but out of place in retrieving. But by working a dog much in retrieving he is very apt to learn, sooner or later, that a low nose is useful, and he then so uses it. Then his value as a finder is impaired.

Observing now that it is essential for the good re-

triever to work with a low nose when seeking dead or wounded birds, and that a finding dog is predisposed to acquire a low carriage of nose in retrieving, which may become habitual, it is readily apparent that the finding and pointing capabilities of a good finding dog may be impaired by retrieving. It is furthermore apparent that the good retriever, by applying his retrieving methods in work on live birds, will exhibit some very bungling attempts at pointing.

If a finding dog, particularly in his early training, has been required to retrieve a large number of birds—sometimes a large number is not necessary to develop the habit—he is almost sure to acquire the habit of trailing by foot-scent.

Yet there are exceptions. A few dogs will do both kinds of work well, though the instances are few indeed in which the dog shows no ill effects from the double work of finding and retrieving. The exceptions wherein the dog is both a good finder and retriever always refer to dogs of superior intelligence, ones which have a masterly understanding of details and the correct manner of performing the work. They mark the fall of the live birds accurately, and therefore have but comparatively little trailing or searching for them.

Such are the faults and advantages of the finder-retriever. He may not be so good a retriever as the special retriever, nor so good a finder as he would be were he a special finder, but, on the score of expediency, the finder-retriever is a necessity with many sportsmen.

When the objection against the special retriever is from prejudice, it is most unreasonable and unwarranted. The special retriever is not a finicky refinement in shoot-

ing when the conditions are such as to permit of his use; nor is it a coarse and unskillful method which requires a dog to both find and retrieve when the conditions so demand. The needs of a people are measured greatly by the peculiar circumstances governing their necessities, whether in respect to work or play, and allowance must be made accordingly.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### **The Dog's Mentality.**

NEARLY all writers on the dog ascribe to him powers of mind or mental phenomena distinct and above the acts of mere instinct.

Hutchinson, who was a close observer as well as a sound writer on the dog, in his work on dog-training never wearies in the relation of interesting anecdotes of canine intelligence, which cannot be explained on any other hypothesis than that of reason. They denote a perception of means to ends, of cause and effect, of limited powers of induction, of knowledge gained by experience.

In a wild life the dog pursues his prey with intense ardor, from a natural impulse to secure a necessary food supply. The instinct to seek game and capture it is one of the most powerful and assertive in the carnivora. It is a necessity. It is directly profitable to them in maintaining their existence. There are the collateral fascinations of the thrill of battle and the fierce pleasure of killing and possessing. Man has the same instincts in a modified degree, for he loves to go out and kill something when the weather is pleasant or when it is not. But, while the instinct is inherited, the manner of pursuit is acquired. Intelligent methods come from successes

and defeats, and the fullness of experience. In the pursuit of prey, dogs prefer to work in packs, and, as individuals and as packs, they learn to work to the best advantage, helping each other intelligently toward the common purpose of making a capture.

At first, however, in working to the gun, the dog is intent on pursuing in his own manner for himself exclusively; next he compromises or works under restraint; and at last, after more or less experience and schooling, and after having observed the success of the new methods, he works heartily to co-operate with the gun, since so much success attends its use. He is denied the final pleasure of killing and eating the prey; but, as he is provided with food by his master, he from the deprivation suffers no material loss.

The instinct of the aboriginal ancestor in man, who lived by the chase, and the instinct inherited by the dog, are both strong after centuries of domestication.

The dog does not hunt solely from a love for his master, but he works better for him if he does love him. He, however, enjoys himself much more on a self-hunt, wherein he hunts in his own manner and possesses what he captures. He may love his master, but that does not imply that he loves menial work. He may fight for his master, but a lively little scrimmage on occasion is often to the dog's liking.

The common belief seems to be that the dog acts from the impulse of instinct throughout his life. Many people concede no higher mentality to him than what comes from instinct, and this too notwithstanding that true instincts are independent of experience; while the dog's knowledge is dependent on experience and education.



"ROYAL LUCK."

A few people proceed on the theory that punishment will force a knowledge into the dog's consciousness.

Considering the short life of the dog, the fund of knowledge which he acquires is wonderfully great. He first learns with extraordinary readiness what is profitable to his own interests. All his knowledge must be acquired by individual observation; for he has not the power of speech, though he has a limited ability to communicate with his fellows through the medium of barks, whines and actions. The acquisition of knowledge being to him thus limited, his methods are extremely slow as compared to those of man, who has vast stores, oral and written, the accumulations of centuries, to draw from. But when we compare man in his savage state with the higher orders of the lower animals, the difference in the mental capacity and manner of acquiring experience grows less. Primitive man must depend largely on his own personal experience for his knowledge at best, and among savages, who have no literature, and whose language is crude and limited, knowledge is meager in extent and is often inaccurate.

All training of the dog should be on the theory that he is a reasoning animal, possessing keen perception of cause and effect in connection with the circumstances which are within the scope of his animal needs, domestic life and every-day observation.

It is impossible in so limited space to give all the proof that a dog has reasoning powers, but enough can be advanced to give the beginner some matter for reflection, and thus stimulate him to further investigation.

Only a few of the common phenomena will be briefly mentioned, so that the reader need not take the theory of

a dog's mentality wholly on trust. It is, first of all, unreasonable to assume that a dog goes on day after day, without any intelligence in himself, constantly exhibiting acts which bear every mark of intelligent conception and execution. The acts, too, improve in their efficiency with the experience and maturity of the dog. As his experiences multiply and his brain matures, his wisdom becomes greater. No one will deny that an aged dog exhibits more knowledge than does a puppy; yet, if his acts were instinctive, the first act in youth would be quite as perfect as the best ones of age, since instinct for its exercise is entirely independent of reason or experience.

Everyone has observed that the dog, in domestic life, soon learns what acts are pleasurable and profitable, and what ones are not. He has much elasticity of disposition in fitting himself to the peculiarities of the household of which he is a member. In daily securing a sufficient supply of food, he exercises thought, perception and attention in a variety of ways which are closely analogous to those practised by man. In looking to his bodily comfort he makes no mistake in his selections, if a comfortable place is available. He readily modifies his own habits and inclinations to fit with those of the household, thus adjusting himself quietly to his environment. He learns the secret of being present, but not in anyone's way. Yet, while he is peaceful, unpretentious and deferential, he maintains a sort of dignified self-possession and independence, unlike the manner of menial servitude.

He soon learns what is forbidden and what is permitted, and also at what times he may assert himself rightly or with toleration. He learns to distinguish

friends of the family from strangers. He feels a constant responsibility as a guardian, showing it by sounding alarms at any unusual circumstance which comes within his observation, or by presenting a hostile front if there appears to be a need of force. He can draw apt conclusions from new experiences of every-day life. Taken into a new environment, he shows unrest and a want of knowledge, as when a country dog is taken into the city or vice versa. In a few days, however, he has mastered the new problem and is at ease, much as man does under similar circumstances.

He can remember his experiences, and his memory of places is in most instances superior to that of man.

These are but a few of the common phenomena of the every-day life of the dog, and in judging of intellect, whether in man or dog, such are the only data from which we can draw conclusions; in short, they are the only data which we have.

We observe, however, that the mentality of man is of a much higher order than that of the dog, though men vary greatly in intellect, some of the inferior savage races being very low in the scale. As to our neighbor's reasoning powers, we can only judge of them by his actions and utterances, supplemented by such subjective knowledge as we have of ourselves. From observing that he has a more or less true perception of cause and effect, we concede he belongs in the realm of reasoning beings.

So also, apart from his nerve and brain structure and formation, which are analogous to those of man, the ever changing phenomena of dog life are all we have whereby to judge of the dog's mental status.

Yet many men will not admit that the dog has any

reasoning powers, and this purely from an egotistical standpoint; the question thus not resting on a true basis, but on the man's own self-love, which will not permit him to concede an equality in an inferior animal. If asked for his data for his belief, he offers only vague assertion or sentimental objection. The most general argument against the dog's intelligence is that man is the only reasoning animal by divine grace; that reason is the distinguishing feature which makes man the highest and noblest animal, etc. But as man's vanity has been inordinate throughout all ages, nation claiming superiority over nation, class over class and individual over individual, it is possible that the claim of sole intellect may be merely arbitrary and unwarranted assumption. When a man, by simply wearing a feather, a cocked hat or an insignia, feels above his fellows, it is not strange that all men should agree that they are better than all else when the all else is voiceless. Although reason in man is not a fixed quantity, it varying with his intellect, and his intellect varies from nothing to the highest, his supreme vanity is a fixed quantity always, whether in reference to the civilized man or the savage, the wise or the simple. From time immemorial the individual has yearned for some distinguishing mark of exaltation above his fellows. Often a ridiculous and artificial one serves his purpose when his judgment and taste are not tempered by good sense, education and discipline. Striving ever for superiority over his fellows, how easy it is then for all to agree unanimously on the inferiority of the lower animals. However inferior the lowest man may be to other men, he thus has the proud distinction of superiority to the lower animals. They cannot dispute him.

As for instinct, although it cannot be defined other than in a negative manner, it has one peculiarly distinguishing feature from reason, namely, it is independent of memory and experience. For instance, young birds succeed, at the first attempt, in building their nests perfect in structure, of the proper material, and after the pattern of those built by their parents, and all independent of experience.

At certain seasons of the year the migratory instinct irresistibly impels whole species of birds to fly southward.

The bee selects the right flowers from which to gather its honey, and it builds its comb on the same correct geometrical principles as did its ancestors.

The young of mammals nurse from the dam at the first attempt, before they even have a consciousness.

Enough instances have been enumerated to show the difference between an instinctive act, independent of experience, and an intelligent one resulting from reason. But, besides being independent of experience, instincts are common and alike to each individual of a species, and each individual exercises the common instinct much in the same manner. Each instinct seems to have a uniform purpose in preserving the life of the individual in the early stages of existence, or in preserving the species. Once concede the theory of instinct, and it reduces the whole of a species to the same dead level theoretically.

Acts which are the result of reason are very unlike. Given the same cause, different individuals will draw different conclusions from it. Anyone who has shot over dogs has observed their different methods of solving similar problems of roading, pointing, etc., and their different powers of observation and comprehension, etc.

As every dog during his life has had different experiences and in most instances different surroundings, besides the differences which will constantly arise from their unequal and varying intellects and emotions, so they will be unlike in character, habits and methods. As among men, some will be born with better brains than others, and there will thus be exhibited an endless variety of character and capabilities and intelligence.

Besides reason the dog exhibits many of the emotions of man, emotions which come from feeling and comprehension, as grief, joy, anger, affection, pride, etc. That he has a certain though limited power of abstract reasoning is shown by his comprehension of the use of a gun when his master takes it in hand to go afield; or by the act of the retriever in capturing the wounded bird first before noticing the dead one; or by his hostility to ill-clothed or ill-favored persons who have a suspicious appearance, etc. Were his acts due to instinct, he would have them as perfect in early youth as in old age, for instinct is independent of experience. Capt. McMurdo, in the chapter on "English Retrievers," gives some instances of intelligence exhibited by the dog which cannot be reconciled with the theory of instinct.

The beginner should realize the importance of appealing to the dog's understanding in a rational manner. If the reader is desirous of pursuing the subject further, there is an abundance of special literature which covers it quite fully.

In conclusion, few people would have the hardihood to deny that a dog's intelligence or instinct is of a higher order than is that of a shell-fish. Indeed, while a man might concede the intelligence of the dog, he might

hesitate to concede it to the shell-fish. Yet in his work, "The Descent of Man," Darwin, who is conceded to have been something of an observer, said: "The mental powers of the crustacea are probably higher than at first sight appears probable. Anyone who tries to catch one of the shore crabs so common in tropical coasts will perceive how wary and alert they are."

If mental powers can be perceived in a crab, the superficial observer should be slow to deny their presence in dogs, horses and other animals. Nor does the admission of intellect in the lower animals depreciate the intellect of man, for in the scale of mentality he is high above the lower animals.



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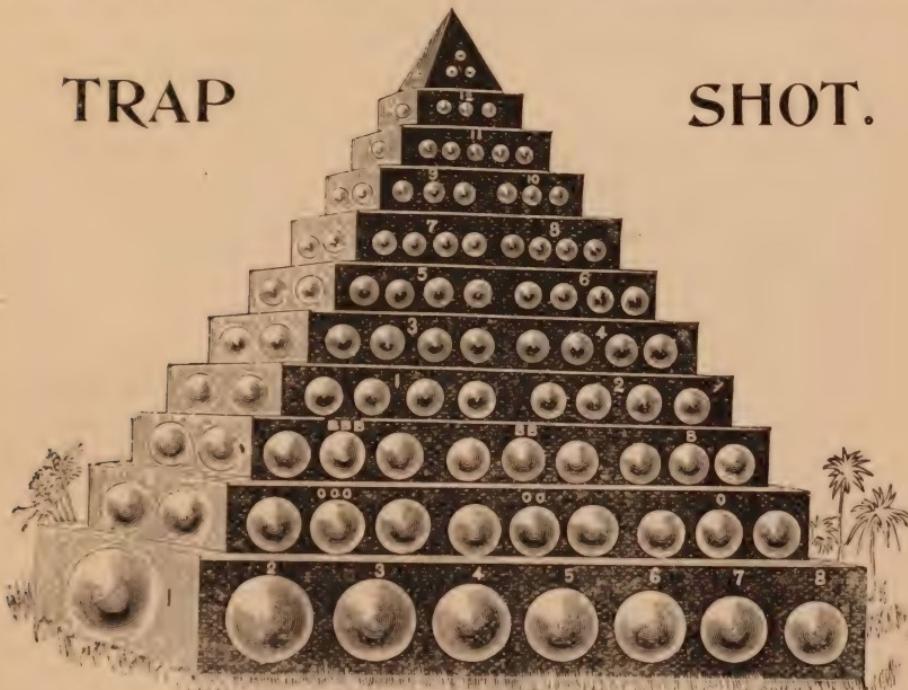
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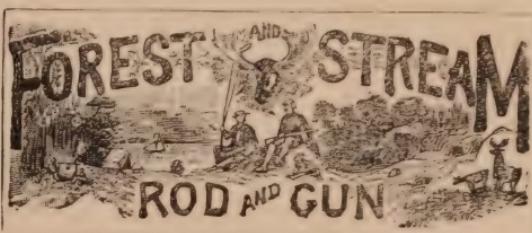
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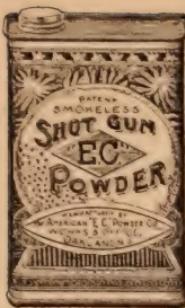
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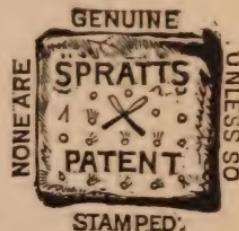
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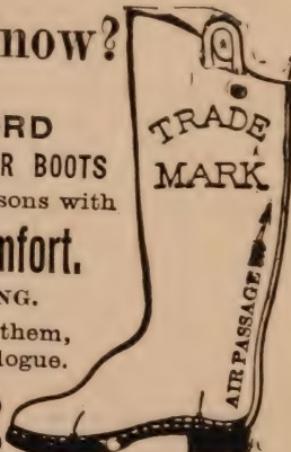
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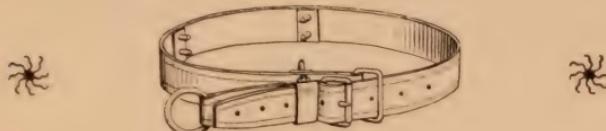
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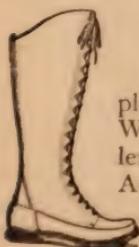
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